the weekly
Standard

AN ACT OF VANDALISM

LANCE ESPLUND
on the sacking of a great American museum

Main gallery,
the Barnes Foundation

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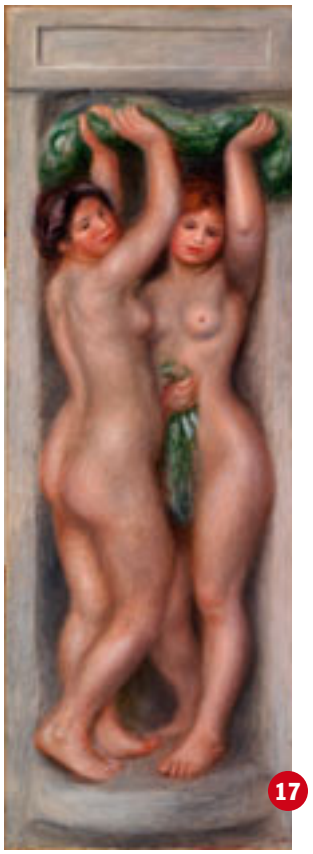

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Obama Politicizes Science!

Being a superstar intellectual himself—we hear he reads Niebuhr and Burke!—it was natural that President Obama would assemble a group of superstar scientists to figure out a way to clean up British Petroleum's giant oil mess in the Gulf of Mexico. The Department of Energy selected five scientists who, we can only assume, are something like the Top Guns, the best of the best, of the oil-spill remediation community. Two weeks ago these big brains assembled in Houston to get cracking on the disaster.

But last week, one member of the team ran into a problem. It was discovered that Washington University physicist Jonathan Katz has a website on which he has published a number of non-physics essays, among them "In Defense of Homophobia" and "Diversity Is the Last Refuge of a Scoundrel." Here's an excerpt from the latter:

> When someone talks about "diversity" he is changing the subject from his proper responsibility—doing his job better. At a university that is improving the quality of teaching and research. At a government agency it is serving the public. In a foundation it is carrying out the donor's wishes. And in a profit-making corporation it is making money for the shareholders. The next time you hear or read "diversity," substitute "Americanism," another right-sounding (but now unfashionable) slogan. Both of these are excuses for not doing one's proper job.
>
> Diversity has another attraction. It offers the pygmy Napoleons of administration a chance to interfere in every decision made—procurement, hiring and (at universities) student admissions. It keeps them busy and justifies their existence. It is a protection racket—give them a percentage or they will prevent you from hiring or admitting the people you need, or awarding contracts to the lowest or best bidders. It provides administrators plenty of opportunities to do favors for their friends, a natural human desire which, in other circumstances, remains under an ethical cloud. It often amounts to breach of fiduciary responsibility, violation of a public trust, or theft. It is the fashionable form of patronage.

So Katz is a physics genius with a streak of the iconoclastic blogger in him. Which, of course, is unacceptable to the pygmy Napoleons. Nearly as soon as his extracurricular essays were outed, Katz was booted from the blue-ribbon oil spill committee.

It's of course within any administration's prerogative to steer clear of people who have ideas they find embarrassing or with which they disagree, even if those ideas have nothing to do with the expert's day job or the expertise being sought. But there's a word for this reflex: politics. And do recall that it was Barack Obama who pledged to take "politics out of science" and "restore science to its rightful place."

Two years from now when Obama tries to tar his Republican opponent as someone who doesn't respect science, it will be well worth recalling that the president wouldn't allow a presumably quite expert physicist to help with the oil spill because that man didn't toe the ideological line on affirmative action and gay marriage. ♦

What They Were Thinking

AFP PHOTO / MANDEL NGAN

Afghan President Hamid Karzai with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, May 11.

Woody Would, Wouldn't He?

In olden times the Cannes Film Festival could be relied upon for stories (or more likely, photographs) of topless starlets showing up on the beach, with a gaggle of what we now call paparazzi. But nowadays a topless actress-in-waiting on the beach at Cannes would be about as newsworthy as a major speech on childhood obesity by the first lady, or Lindsay Lohan reentering rehab. In fact, by happy coincidence, the latest Lindsay Lohan catastrophe was the big story

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out of Cannes this year—she couldn't leave France to make a court date in Los Angeles because someone had "stolen" her passport—until Woody Allen decided it was time for him, again, to speak out on the Roman Polanski rape/fugitive case.

As such things go, this was much more in keeping with the modern Cannes festival, which has grown considerably more political over the years and has tended to feature standing ovations for the likes of Michael Moore and press conferences with frenzied actors and directors denouncing global warming or George W. Bush, or both. Allen was interviewed last week by a French radio station, and said the following: "[Polanski] is an artist, he's a nice person, he did something wrong and he paid for it. [The critics] are not happy unless he pays the rest of his life. They would be happy if they could execute him in a firing squad." And then, with that exquisite sense of satire for which he is famous, he added this observation: "They should take the money they spent on the Polanski case and go after drug dealers and rapists."

At first glance, The Scrapbook thought that perhaps the interview had been conducted in French and Woody's language skills were to blame, or that the translation was botched. But the interview had been conducted in English, and he seems to have meant precisely what he said.

Where to begin? First, since Roman Polanski stands accused of raping a drugged 13-year-old girl when he was aged 43, you would think that a 74-year-old man (that's Woody) married to his 39-year-old stepdaughter would hesitate to speak out on the subject. Or that the same 74-year-old would realize that, in pursuing the Polanski case, the authorities are, literally, "going after" a rapist. What's more, Allen seems deliberately to ignore in his extraordinary statement that, while his friend and fellow artist Roman Polanski "did something wrong," the whole convoluted case is based on the fact that he has *not* paid for it: Polanski fled the United States before sentencing and is currently under house arrest in Switzerland pending extradition.

Or put another way, even by the rarefied standards of the Cannes Film Festival, it is hard for The Scrapbook to conceive of anyone less entitled to high moral dudgeon about rape, statutory or otherwise, than Soon-Yi Previn's husband, Woody Allen. Even a topless starlet on the beach would know that. ♦

All a-Twitter

The Internet continues to remake our world: Last week Hugo Chávez took to the worldwide web to encourage Venezuelans to use Twitter to inform on their fellow citizens. Venezuela, you see, is having financial difficulties, the most pressing of which is rapid inflation, which is devaluing the bolivar. Chávez blames "speculators." So, during his weekly radio and TV address he urged his fellow citizens to identify these "thieves." "My Twitter account is open for you to denounce them," he said. He promised that once the denunciations started twittering in, "We're going to launch several raids. We've already launched some raids, thanks to the complaints from the people."

Techno-skeptics will recall that nearly a year ago the world was treated to an endless parade of congratulation about how Twitter was going to bring down the autocratic government of Iran. We won't recapitulate all of "The Revolution Will Be Twittered" stories here—suffice it to say,

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the mullahs endured. Amazingly enough, they were able to defeat social networking with mere soldiers and guns. Who'd a thunk it?

But it is worth noting that the people who got so worked up over the civilization-altering possibilities of social networking weren't just wrong in that they overestimated the Internet's power. They were also wrong in their belief that technology is necessarily an ally of the just. There's no reason Twitter can't be a tool for both Iranian dissidents and a Venezuelan dictator.

At the end of the day, though, it turns out that Twitter isn't a particularly powerful political tool at all. The mullahs are still in power. The bolivar is still cratering. And despite thousands and thousands of glowing press reports, Twitter itself has yet to see a dime of profit. ♦

Decline and Fall . . .

The *Discobolus* of Myron (left)—the most famous depiction of the Olympic athlete of antiquity. "Wenlock" and "Mandeville" (right)—official mascots of the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London, unveiled last week.

MASCOTS: NEWSCOM

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I've Come A Long Way, Baby

"You must be busy packing," an editor once said to me, five days before I flew to Europe to do an article for him. Yeah, I felt like saying, about as busy as you are preparing your retirement party. I pride myself on packing simply and quickly: a few shirts, underclothes, a baggie full of adapters and cords, and a book. I could practically stuff it all into a briefcase.

The only problem is my toiletry kit, which is always jammed so full that I need a full-sized suitcase to accommodate it. Not that I am one of those soigné men who travel with a lot of pomades, creams, colognes, washes, clippers, emery boards, loofah brushes, and mustache-curlers. I wouldn't tell you if I were, but there is a long trail of visual evidence that I'm not. The beautifying part of my luggage—razor, toothpaste and toothbrush, deodorant, and a 4-ounce vial of industrial-strength dandruff shampoo—fits easily into one Ziploc lunch bag.

There are a few other things. One is Advil PM, for fighting jet lag. What a product. It'll drop you like a sack of grain. A nose-hair clipper, about which little need be said. There are also certain items for episodes that seem random but somehow occur on every trip: Sudafed for colds, regular Advil for headaches, shoelaces for when you break one.

The main reason why my suitcase nonetheless winds up looking like a mobile medicine cabinet is nicotine lozenges. These are manufactured under the brand name "Commit" by the pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline as a means of helping people through those first, difficult days after quitting smoking. They have certainly helped me through my first 2,750 or so. I have been sucking them happily for years. The problem is, one feels distinctly bad when one doesn't have them. One feels like weeping or screaming, in fact. You would almost think they were addictive.

At home, you can get Commit in any CVS. In Europe, it is called Ni-Quitin, and it is much harder to find, particularly if you happen to be in a country where people have more important things to worry about than whether they quit smoking or not.

CHRIS GASH

I remember being unable to find nicotine lozenges at all in Israel a few years ago, although a long search did turn up some substitutes. There were these odd little plastic straws, shaped like a clarinet reed or an FDR-style cigarette holder, out of which you could, with great effort, draw a little bit of concentrated nicotine vapor. There were "micro tabs," small enough so you could fit a couple dozen on your thumbnail. These were so unpleasant to ingest that I assumed they were meant for grinding into powder and dissolving in water.

So it is better to carry a two-weeks' supply of nicotine than to get caught a day short and have to, say, go hunting for them in Amsterdam on Ascension Thursday, a national holiday when all the pharmacies are closed, or to take a taxi across town after midnight (I have done this in both Brussels and Cologne) and wake up the "24-hour pharmacist," a description that does not mean that the pharmacy is open, but rather that, if you ring the bell for the apartment above the shop, the pharmacist will wake up, come downstairs in his pajamas, collect your money through the mail slot, and hand you what you need.

These mint-flavored marvels come in 2mg and 4mg sizes in the United States. In Spain, they come in a 1mg size, but that is a dosage so low that it might actually leave you in danger of quitting nicotine altogether. I have sometimes wondered whether manufacturers of nicotine substitutes lobby to keep low-dosage products off the market in the United States. In my more cynical moments, in fact, I have suspected "Pharma" (as the conspiracy-minded call the big drug companies) of devising and bankrolling the entire anti-smoking brouhaha in the first place, as a means of transferring income from Carolina tobacco farmers to corporate chemical engineers.

I am embarrassed to say I know how to ask for nicotine lozenges in half a dozen languages I don't even speak. Last Thursday, when, having failed to pack the requisite stash, I was standing in front of a scowling pharmacist saying, "*Zuigtabletten, alstublieft*," I began to think I should get rid of this habit altogether.

Maybe smoking would help.

Christopher Caldwell

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Marx, Keynes, Pelosi

"It is all about a four-letter word: jobs, jobs, jobs, jobs. We are all about jobs."

—Nancy Pelosi, May 4, 2010

"We see [health care reform as] a bill that says to someone, if you want to be creative and be a musician or whatever, you can leave your work, focus on your talent, your skill, your passion, your aspirations because you will have health care. You won't have to be job-locked."

—Nancy Pelosi, speaking to musicians and artists in Washington, D.C., May 15, 2010

The tension between these two statements runs through the left. Pelosi's first statement recalls the Old Left, her second the New. The first is in the spirit of the mature Karl Marx (not to accuse Pelosi of being a Marxist!), while the second echoes the young Marx, who wrote in 1846: "As soon as the distribution of labor comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic."

KEYNES: NEWSCOM

So which is it? Is progressivism all about providing good jobs at good pay? Or is it all about transcending the world of being "job-locked" in the name of creativity?

It's all about both—as we can learn from John Maynard Keynes, who, halfway between the age of Marx and the era of Pelosi, wrote this in 1930:

> When the accumulation of wealth is no longer of high social importance, there will be great changes in the code of morals. We shall be able to rid ourselves of many of the pseudo-moral principles which have hag-ridden us for two hundred years, by which we have exalted some of the most distasteful of human qualities into the position of the highest virtues. We shall be able to afford to dare to assess the money-motive at its true value. The love of money as a possession—as distinguished from the love of money as a means to the enjoyments and realities of life—will be recognized for what it is, a somewhat disgusting morbidity. . . . But beware! The time for all this is not yet. For at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to everyone that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still. For only they can lead us out of the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight.

Keynes has given us a glimpse into the heart of modern progressivism: For now, progress requires a respect for work, for jobs, for economics. So the left embraces the use of government for economic ends. But ultimately all of this is for the sake of transcending "pseudo-moral principles" like precaution. So the left embraces big government while disdaining the need for self-government.

We conservatives, for our part, reject this as the worst of both worlds: stultifying big government statism on the one hand, and dangerously utopian liberationism on the other. Now we agree with Keynes: that the accumulation of wealth is a merely secondary good. But for us the primary good is God or family or country or tradition or morality, not a false promise of liberation from all of these.

And we conservatives differ from Keynes in having regard for the bourgeois virtues. We believe those virtues (itself a conservative word, these days) do have a certain worth and dignity—that bourgeois life does not make fair foul and foul fair.

What's more, conservatives don't believe mankind will ever escape the realm of necessity for that of freedom. We don't think men ever will, or should, move beyond the realm of religious belief and patriotic attachment into some future realm of liberation and daylight. Conservatives don't believe the time will come when men can escape the task of self-government.

So for conservatives, it's jobs in the day and tea parties after dinner, with hunting and church and patriotic parades on the weekends. Not to mention a flourishing private sector to provide jobs, jobs, jobs, jobs to all the Pelosi Democrats voted out of office this November.

—William Kristol

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The 'Beneficial Crisis'

On the road to the European superstate.

BY ANDREW STUTTAFORD

It would have taken a heart of stone not to laugh. Wheeled out earlier this month for celebrations to mark his 80th birthday, a rickety Helmut Kohl announced that the fate of the EU's floundering single currency was a matter of life and death: "European unification is a question of war and peace . . . and the euro is part of our guarantee of peace."

The former chancellor's dire warning might have been a touch more persuasive had it not been repeated quite so many times before. To take just one example, in the course of Sweden's 2003 referendum on whether to sign up for the euro, a "weeping" Kohl told the Swedish premier that he did not want his sons to die in a third world war. A reasonable ambition, but hardly the strongest of arguments for junking the krona. Sensible folk that they are, the Swedes voted *nej* and are all the better for it today.

Panzers will not roll in the event of a euro collapse, but that doesn't mean there isn't a decent case to be made for the $1 trillion (actually $937 billion at the time of writing, but who's counting?) support package for the EU's single currency union announced on May 10. The growing financial panic triggered by Greece's economic woes was metastasizing into a crisis of confidence in the eurozone's southern and western rim—the now notorious PIIGS (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain)—a development that threatened ruin for much of the EU's fragile banking sector and the shattering of any hopes of European economic recovery. After a dangerous delay caused by German hostility to the idea of bankrolling the Greeks, a 110 billion euro ($137 billion) EU/IMF bailout of the Augean state had been agreed. But it came too late to head off the financial markets' mounting unease.

Financial panics are best dissipated by a swift, decisive, and dramatic response that signals that a believable lender of last resort has arrived on the scene. This is why, for all its faults, TARP worked. Uncle Sam had rolled into town. There would be no need after all to storm the ATMs.

Jittery Europeans have had to make do with considerably less reassurance. The eurozone lacks the characteristics and resources of a unified nation. It is a hodgepodge of pacts—some observed, some not—whispered understandings, cultivated ambiguities, and clashing interests that does little to inspire confidence. The nearest it comes to a plausible lender of last resort is Germany, historically the EU's most generous paymaster—a real nation, with real wealth but, awkwardly, real voters too.

Those voters have been up in arms at the thought of helping out Greece. This was the real reason that German chancellor Angela Merkel dithered so long before coming to Athens's aid. She was right to be worried. Within a day or so of the Greek bailout, her governing coalition was thrashed in regional elections in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state.

Something spectacular had to be done. And if $1 trillion isn't spectacular I don't know what is. The support package that finally emerged on May 10 falls into three main parts. The largest is the creation of a "temporary" (three-year) special purpose financing vehicle. This is authorized to borrow up to 440 billion euros ($550 billion) to fund or guarantee loans to member states who find themselves being

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frozen out of the capital markets. On top of this, there will be a 60 billion euro ($75 billion) "rapid reaction" facility operated by the EU Commission and designed to help any eurozone country facing an immediate cash crunch. Oh yes, the IMF agreed to throw another 250 billion euros ($312 billion) into the kitty.

But, wait, there's more. To make sure that struggling European financial institutions are not starved of dollars, a number of the world's major central banks, including the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Fed, revived the emergency currency swap agreements put in place in late 2007. The ECB then topped up the punch bowl by commencing to purchase government debt from the PIIGS, a move explained by the need to move fast (it will be a while before the full support package can be put in place), but which opened the ECB to the charge that it had been reduced to printing money ("quantitative easing" is the preferred euphemism). The ECB denies this, saying the bond purchases are being "sterilized" by other maneuvers draining the excess liquidity the purchases create.

International investors feted the support package for all of one day. Then they recognized that, as Merkel conceded, it had "done nothing more than buy time." The rot within the eurozone continues to fester. As for claims that this was all the fault of the wicked speculators of Wall Street and the City of London (a tiresome cry from the EU's leadership in recent months that reached a new crescendo last week), well, that's like blaming the canary for the gas in the coal mine.

The Greeks, Portuguese, and Spanish have all announced new austerity measures, but, even if we make the optimistic assumption that the recent riots in Greece will be the exception rather than the rule, these steps are unlikely to be enough to bring this story to happy ever after. Piled on top of existing budget cuts, the fresh rounds of slashing and taxing run the risk of crushing what's left of domestic demand and with it an essential element in these countries' ability to generate the additional tax revenues their treasuries so badly need. The usual remedy for such a predicament is devaluation and an export-led recovery, but with the PIIGS yoked to the euro that option is not available. The euro may be weakening against currencies outside the zone, but against their competitors within, the PIIGS are as uncompetitive as always.

It's not easy to unscramble an egg. For one of the PIIGS to quit the euro would almost certainly mean both default on its public debt and the bankruptcy of wide swaths of its private sector. The domino effect across the rest of the continent, and beyond, would be appalling. Another, more promising, alternative, albeit one freighted with severe technical and practical risks of its own, would be for a German-led group to depart the euro and form a separate "hard currency" union of its own, leaving the PIIGS with the deeply depreciated (down perhaps 30-40 percent) euros they so obviously need. This would be tough on the PIIGS' unfortunate creditors, but there would be a chance that default, and all its attendant dangers, could be sidestepped.

Long before Rahm Emanuel's infamous dictum, the idea of a 'beneficial crisis' was common in Brussels.

Yet no such alternative is on the menu. In confronting the hole into which joining the euro has dropped them, the eurozone's leaders seem determined to dig ever deeper. We can debate their rationale, in all probability a mix of cowardice, conviction, careerism, and delusion, but not the likelihood of the conclusion to which they will come. Speaking in Aachen—the burial place of Charlemagne, an early Eurocrat—on May 13, Merkel made clear that she was still drinking the Kohl-Aid: "If the euro fails," she warned, "Europe fails too, [and so does] the idea of European unification. We have a common currency, but no common political and economic union. And this is exactly what we must change. To achieve this, therein lies the opportunity of this crisis."

Long before Rahm Emanuel's infamous dictum, the idea of a "beneficial crisis" (to borrow the terminology of Jacques Delors, a former president of the EU Commission) was common in Brussels. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that some smarter Eurocrats saw the flaws in the way that the euro had been set up as a feature, not a bug. The crisis to come would create the conditions in which the nations of the EU could be persuaded to submit to further federation.

On May 12, the current president of the EU Commission, José Manuel Barroso, argued that "member states should have the courage to say if they want an economic union or not. Because without it, monetary union is not possible." The commission's proposals include greater macroeconomic supervision, increased emphasis on deficit reduction, and the establishment of a permanent emergency financing mechanism. The most controversial idea is the suggestion EU governments submit their *national* budgets for review by their counterparts within the union before presenting them to their own parliaments. Whether this review would be merely advisory or carries a veto power has been left conveniently vague.

Barroso also wants a more punitive regime imposed on governments that persist in breaking the budgetary rules that supposedly underpin the euro. There are limits, however. The commission did not back Merkel's call for provision to be made to allow the eurozone's more persistent reprobates to be expelled from the currency union. Permitting such a procedure, even in theory, would imply that the grand European project could sometimes go into reverse, and that would never do.

Most of these measures will edge forward at best. Not all member states are enthusiastic about the push for what Herman Van Rompuy, the president of the EU's council, has referred to as a European "*gouvernement économique*," an elastic term capable of, in Van

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Rompuy's sinuous prose, "asymmetric translation" in different languages, from the comparatively nebulous English "governance" to something altogether more concrete.

But, if some governments are not enthusiastic, it's difficult to see what else they can do—unless they are prepared to quit the eurozone. And they are even less enthusiastic about that.

The next stage of this drama ought to have been something of an anticlimax as nerves were soothed by that calming trillion. Instead, Merkel sent markets sliding by imposing, amongst other measures, a "temporary" ban in Germany on "naked" short selling (selling securities that you do not own and have not made arrangements to borrow) of eurozone government bonds and the stocks of some of her country's leading financial institutions. This was accompanied by promises of further regulation and yet more railing against speculators, "out-of-control" markets, and banks.

The message sent by the new rules was grim. And it was received. By playing the populist card, Merkel had highlighted the extent of the political problems she faces back home. That's not what investors wanted to hear. Some also fretted that the new restrictions were a hint that the finances of Germany's banking sector were even worse than feared.

So, what's next? Predicting short-term currency movements at a time like this is a mug's game. I'll just stick with the word "choppy" and the belief that a trillion dollars ought to buy the euro some time. It won't be a huge surprise if some of that time—and some of that money—is eventually used to smooth the increasingly inevitable "restructuring" of Greek, and possibly Portuguese, sovereign debt. Nevertheless that will not be the end of the matter. A trillion dollar band-aid is still a band-aid. This spring's crisis has demonstrated that the existing system cannot survive as it stands.

To succeed, a monetary union the size of the eurozone needs a high degree of central control, consistent and enforceable budgetary discipline, and spending (and thus taxing) powers sufficient to ensure that the cyclical imbalances in its constituent parts can be evened out. That reality has now essentially been accepted by the German and the French governments. Although negotiating the details of common economic governance will drag on for years, in the end the French and the Germans will, despite some truly fundamental differences, get there—and they won't be alone. Faced with the prospect of being excluded from the EU's tightening core, more countries than might now be imagined will choose to jump in notwithstanding its tougher disciplinary regime. While today's "two-speed" union will continue to exist, the division will deepen, and on one side of it there will be something that looks suspiciously like a European superstate.

The financial markets could still disrupt this transition, which is one reason that the EU's leadership is so keen to rein them in. Trouble may also come from a group often ignored in the saga of "ever closer" union—the electorates of Europe.

One of the more telling characteristics of the EU's progress is the way it has been forced through regardless of the wishes of ordinary voters. The "reuniting" of Europe has been a project of the elites, the fruit of mandarin cabal and backroom deal. Voters have rarely been given much of an opportunity to demur. And when they have been asked their opinion and called for a halt to further integration, the results have been ignored or subjected to do-over until the "right" result came through.

That's not to claim that Europe's mainland is seething with euroskepticism. It's not. There is, however, widespread apathy and a profound alienation. As the voters of North Rhine-Westphalia have just reminded us, there's not a lot of fellow-feeling in that imaginary European family.

This might have mattered less in economically more comfortable times, or in the times when Brussels was not stretching so far, blithe times when voters (foolishly) and Eurocrats (realistically) could, for the most part, pretend that the other did not exist. That's over now. Building an economic union is messy and intrusive. It'll be hard to slip it through on the quiet. The PIIGS are being ordered to take a long hard road. The peoples of Northern Europe will be told to pay for its paving.

What if either says no? ♦

The View from the Sidelines

Jeb Bush on the Republican future.

BY FRED BARNES

Coral Gables, Florida

Jeb Bush is not running for president in 2012. He may never run, though he doesn't think the Bush name has been poisoned by his brother's turbulent presidency. "I'm not one of the 5, 10, 15 people who wake up each day and say, 'What do I need to do today to position myself to run for president?'" And Bush notes he passed up the chance to run for both senator and governor in Florida this year.

His office is in a wing of the elegant Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables. It's a mile from his home and 15 minutes from Miami International Airport. There's a relaxed atmosphere, and Bush, 57, greets me in a casual shirt and no tie. After two terms as a popu-

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lar governor of Florida (1999 to 2007), he seems unhurried, comfortable in his consulting business and speechmaking.

Yet the Jeb Bush political saga hasn't come to an end. He remains active in the Republican party and conservative circles. "I am involved," he told me last week. He'll address the New York Republican convention next week. "People seek my advice out, which is really flattering. The fact that I'm not running for something puts me in a position where I might be listened to more."

His advice to Republicans for the midterm elections: Pursue a bold, policy-oriented campaign. "I completely disagree with the idea that you rope-a-dope," he says. "If we just are trying to be against the president's efforts to redefine who we are as a nation, eventually . . . you can't score many touchdowns playing defense the whole game."

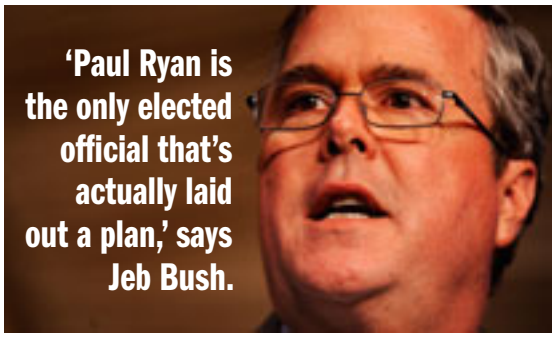
For Republican candidates, "This is a good time to be a little less constrained in your thinking," Bush says. "Candidates that win will be a little emboldened. They're not going to take the traditional point of view that we can't be too provocative because we're going to upset the population. Think big and bold. Fill the space. Paint in Britto-like colors, not pastels. My man Romero Britto. He's our favorite artist, a Brazilian artist." Britto paintings hang on the walls of Bush's office.

"My guess is, post-November, should things go well, you're going to see the emerging Cantor-Ryan wing of the Republican party—the policy activists—in their ascendency," Bush says. "They'll be in the ascendency in the Senate as well. And you'll have activist conservative governors. In 2011, I think you're going to see all sorts of efforts to act on the belief in entrepreneurial capitalism and limited government."

He's read Paul Ryan's "Roadmap" for reform, "all 95 pages of it. It's fantastic. Paul Ryan is the only elected official that's actually laid out a plan. He has a very thoughtful, realistic approach to dealing with this fiscal crisis, and he's the only guy out of 300 million people that I've seen that has done so."

For the country to prosper, Bush thinks a dramatic increase in immigration is needed. He's sympathetic to Arizona's tough response to a surge in illegal immigrants and also supports "comprehensive reform," code for stiffer border security and a path to citizenship for illegals living here. But, he says, "This whole debate in Washington is missing one key ingredient, the real world ingredient. How are we going to grow to create jobs, real jobs, private sector jobs that aren't created out of fiat money?"

Bush's answer is to reject President Obama's economic plan and adopt "sustained economic growth as a policy. Part of that would be to create a new immigration system that allowed us to have a guest worker program . . . and would open our country to capitalists, entrepreneurs, technologists, researchers. They would come. The only way you can grow is to have a meaningful immigration strategy that says growth is good."



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But that—and especially amnesty for illegals—can't occur until the border with Mexico is secure. "More fence, sure," Bush says. "It's just no one trusts Washington until you show the good faith of protecting the border."

Bush has done a back-of-the-envelope calculation about what an economic growth strategy could produce. Obama's policy won't generate more than 1.5 percent growth annually, he says. But with "lower taxes, more rational regulation, limiting the power of government in general, particularly in Washington, investing in research, innovation, education—and get out of the way, trust capitalism to work and you can achieve easily 2 percent more per year," Bush insists. "You end up with $3.5 trillion of extra economic activity, more than the entire economy of Germany."

Not bad, and there's an additional benefit: unifying conservatives. "We have all these factions inside the conservative cause, people focused on social issues, or libertarian leave-me-alone issues or paleocons or neocons or traditional conservatives," Bush says. "It seems to me if you ask what is the one thing that we all agree on, [it's] that we passionately agree that entrepreneurial capitalism works."

There's a "common thread," among the Republican candidates he's supporting in 2010. They have "a real passion for policy reform, particularly education." He's endorsed some in primary contests: Scott Walker in Wisconsin, Bradley Byrne in Alabama, Meg Whitman in California, Brian Sandoval in Nevada, Tom Corbett in Pennsylvania.

He's particularly close to Florida Senate candidate Marco Rubio. Bush is also critical of Governor Charlie Crist, who abandoned the race against Rubio in the Republican primary to run for senator as an independent. "It's all about him," Bush says. "It's not about anything else. . . . Governor Crist organizes his life around his personal ambitions. . . . He doesn't have a set of guiding principles to share with people. This is a year where people want you to say what your core beliefs are, and painting in brighter, bolder colors instead of pastels is the way to go. Which is very encouraging to me personally."

Bush figures Crist will finish third behind Rubio ("Marco wins going away") and Democrat Kendrick Meek. Rubio, the former Florida House speaker, is Bush's ideal candidate. "He's unique in the sense that he's very eloquent and he's cheerful and joyful. He has a wonderful attitude, and people are depressed, and he lifts people's spirits up." In short, Rubio is a lot like another Florida politician, one who's not running for anything this year. ♦

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Exodus from Dictatorship

Why is Washington such a sucker for Mubarak?

BY ELLEN BORK

Mohamed ElBaradei addresses supporters, April 2, 2010.

Cairo

In a café here a few weeks ago, an Egyptian intellectual began our conversation by explaining how strongly he opposed the use of American power to bring about political change abroad. Just half a cup of coffee later, he told me that "this is the moment" for the United States to put pressure on President Hosni Mubarak to undertake democratic reforms.

Other Egyptians I met with—activists, small businessmen, journalists, academics—were conflicted as well, not about whether Washington should use its influence to push Mubarak toward a more democratic system but whether it would. They see the United States as trapped by its reliance on Mubarak, who uses the threat of Islamic radicalism and the promise of assistance in the Israeli-Palestinian "peace process" to deflect pressure on his regime to improve its record on democracy and human rights.

Virtually no one expected President Obama to push Mubarak, whose fifth presidential term ends in 2011, to allow independent monitoring of elections, end the state of emergency, and remove barriers to independent candidacies. The impact of Obama's Cairo speech last June, making the case for democracy in Islamic countries, had "evaporated" according to an independent newspaper editor once jailed for commenting on Mubarak's health. Nevertheless, nearly everyone I've met hopes, some desperately, for action by Washington. "Even people who hate the United States want it to do something," a political party activist based outside Cairo told me.

Doing something for democracy in Egypt would require a policy reversal in Washington. U.S. pressure in 2005 contributed to some improvements, including the first multicandidate presidential election. Even so, the election was a travesty, and since the end of the Bush administration and the beginning of the Obama administration, there has been retreat—including a cut in funding for democracy programs and acquiescence to an Egyptian veto over which groups may receive U.S. funds. An Egyptian proposal for a U.S.-funded "endowment" for development projects with little or no emphasis on political reform or congressional oversight has quietly gained ground. The current American ambassador has a reputation for being weak on democracy and human rights.

The debate over whether to subordinate democracy to Middle East peace has been around as long as Mubarak—nearly 30 years—which, as many Egyptian democracy activists point out, shows how unsuccessful Mubarak has been at delivering it. In fact, the guiding principle of U.S. policy is "stability" both inside Egypt and in the region. Mubarak's stability, however, contains the seeds of its own destruction—economic stagnation, corruption, and repression. Regardless of whether the stability Washington clings to is real, it is not sustainable. Mubarak, 82, has been ill, has no vice president, and has not designated a successor. Since surgery in Germany in March, he has made few public appearances. The prospect of his son, Gamal, taking over is deeply unpopular and has helped to stoke the opposition. In the meantime, Mohamed ElBaradei, the former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, made a dramatic return to Egypt, attracting a broad—some say unworkably broad—coalition of supporters and enthusiasm from a normally politically-enervated population. Observers detect signs of Mubarak's waning influence in the region already, such as in the ongoing negotiations with neighboring countries over the distribution of Nile river water.

Cairo is growing tense. So far, Mubarak shows no sign of ceding ground. On May 11, he renewed the state of emergency, in place since Sadat's assassination in 1981, despite

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previously promising that it would be ended. Many people fear a crackdown and the alienation of those newly interested in politics. A few weeks ago, a ruling party member of parliament provoked an uproar by saying it would be justifiable to shoot demonstrators in the street.

As for Egyptian hopes for U.S. action, American officials rarely set about to bring down authoritarian allies. The recent case of Kyrgyzstan illustrates how reluctant the United States can be to accept, let alone accelerate, the departure of a strongman on whom it relies: Kurmanbek Bakiyev used Washington's desire to maintain an airbase to resist human rights entreaties.

America's acquiescence does not go unnoticed. "You came to us to help us build democracy," the leader of the post-Bakiyev government has said, "and then just one day, you put your hands over your mouth just to have a base."

Egyptians regard the United States with a mixture of resentment, confusion, and hope. They are surprised at American credulousness about Mubarak. Most people I spoke to believe that the trade-off Mubarak peddles, between authoritarian control and Islamist rule, is bogus. They think that the threat of Islamist radicals' winning a free election is overstated, and that granting Egyptians political rights would neutralize the threat further. They ask what the Egyptian government is doing to forestall the appeal of such movements and why the United States is so hypocritical about democracy in Egypt.

In a bare party headquarters a few hours outside Cairo, I found myself trying to explain the way America acts to a polite but frustrated group of mainly small businessmen. I told them that in the past, Washington has sometimes used its influence to help bring about democratic transitions, withdrawing its support from dictators like Chun Doo Hwan in South Korea and Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. Later I realized that Churchill had said it better: Washington always does the right thing, after it's exhausted all the alternatives. ♦

Out with the Old

Don't trust a congressman over the age of 50.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

As far as I can tell, Sean Duffy is the only world-champion lumberjack and reality television star running for Congress this year. Duffy is the Republican candidate in Wisconsin's 7th Congressional District. A district attorney, he's married to another television star, Rachel Campos-Duffy. They met on the set of MTV's *The Real World*: *Road Rules All Stars* in 1998. They have six children. Duffy's a member of the House Republicans' "Young Guns" recruitment program and has earned Sarah Palin's endorsement. But most important, his candidacy—and the prospect of a Republican takeover of the House of Representatives—led 20-term incumbent Democrat David Obey to announce his retirement. The seat is open, and Duffy has a strong chance to win it.

The first thing that strikes you about Duffy is his age. At 38, he wasn't even born when Obey entered Congress. Duffy is 33 years younger than Obey. He could be the son of the man he hopes to replace. Duffy and Obey grew up during different times. They were influenced by different events. They view the world through different lenses, and they have different priorities. "My oldest child is 10, my youngest is two months old," Duffy says. "I have a unique concern about the America my children are going to inherit. Is it going to be as great as the America I inherited?"

Duffy is not alone. Congress is in the midst of the most significant generational shift since 1974. The congressmen and senators who came of age during the Nixon years, mainly liberal Democrats shaped by Vietnam and Watergate, are on the way out. A bunch of youngsters, mainly conservative Republicans shaped by 9/11 and the financial crisis, is on the way in. It's a trend that will influence our politics for decades.

And it's been a long time coming. The average age of senators declined between 1955 and 1981, and the average age of representatives reached a low of 47 in 1983. But these averages have been increasing, in fits and starts, ever since. There was a brief dip in 1995 with the Republican Revolution, but the trend quickly resumed. In 1995, the average age of representatives was 51. The average age of senators was 58. Now the averages are 57 and 63.

Expect those numbers to be much lower when the 112th Congress convenes next January. Congress will look more like Aaron Schock, the 29-year-old Republican congressman from Illinois's 18th Congressional District, and a lot less like Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who turns 93 this November.

The change is obvious when you look at recent primaries, special elections, and retirements. In early May, Utah Republicans ditched the 76-year-old incumbent senator, Robert Bennett. Two 40-somethings are battling to replace him. (Representative Jason Chaffetz, 43, is already thinking about challenging the 76-year-old Orrin Hatch in 2012.)

In Kentucky, 47-year-old Rand Paul is running to replace the 78-year-old Jim Bunning. In Arizona, former representative J.D. Hayworth, 51, is challenging John McCain, 73. In Massachusetts in January, 50-year-old Republican Scott Brown replaced the late Senator Edward Kennedy, who died at 77.

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In Hawaii, 71-year-old Democratic representative Neil Abercrombie is retiring to run for governor. It's likely that Republican Charles Djou, 39, will replace him. In North Dakota, 53-year-old Republican governor John Hoeven is the frontrunner to replace Democratic senator Byron Dorgan, who is retiring at 68. Former congressman Rob Portman, 54, is running for the seat of outgoing Ohio senator George Voinovich, 73.

Who are the most dynamic and interesting leaders in the Republican party today? Individuals like Bobby Jindal (38), Marco Rubio (39), and Paul Ryan (40). At 46, Sarah Palin and Eric Cantor are the adults of this group. Mitt Romney, 63, is an elder statesman.

A similar, if less pronounced transition is taking place inside the Democratic party. Last week, 48-year-old Mark Critz won a special election to replace the late Representative John Murtha, who died at 77. In Pennsylvania, 58-year-old Joe Sestak defeated 80-year-old incumbent senator Arlen Specter. (This is after Specter left the Republican party in order to avoid a primary loss to 48-year-old Pat Toomey.) On May 11, 46-year-old Mike Oliverio defeated 14-term incumbent Alan Mollohan, who is 67. An entire cohort of septuagenarians is being washed away before our eyes.

A certain conception of politics may vanish with them. The 1974 election was a reaction to the Watergate scandal and Vietnam war. The Democrats who ran that year promised to reform Washington in the wake of Nixonian corruption and end American involvement in Southeast Asia. But this is ancient history for the young candidates running today. They don't remember Nixon or Kissinger or Vietnam. Many of them are too young to have participated in the Cold War. For them, Reagan was a grandfatherly figure who appeared on television. These youngsters may have watched the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the protests in Tiananmen Square, and Yeltsin on a tank outside the Supreme Soviet, but they had little understanding of these events at the time. For them, the landscape of politics was shaped by 9/11 and the financial crisis of 2008.

They are reacting to the establishment's response to the financial crisis. The establishment theory is that the panic was caused by too little government. So, beginning in 2008, the government intervened massively in the economy. It took over Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. It seized AIG. It authorized the TARP bailout of the major banks. It bailed out GM and Chrysler.

These policies may have begun under Bush, but Obama has maintained them. And Obama goes a step further. He says the country has been on the wrong track since 1981. He says America requires a "new foundation," based on a large and active central government, to make our country great. From the stimulus to health care to cap and trade to more taxes and more federal involvement in education, all of Obama's policies fit into this new foundation. But Obama was not prepared for the backlash against his vision.

Next January, Congress will look more like Aaron Schock, the 29-year-old Illinois congressman and a lot less like Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who turns 93 this November.

The antiestablishment theory is different. It says government policy contributed to the housing bubble and overleveraged banks and that self-interested elites are using government to make things worse. The next generation of congressmen is anti-bailout and anti-D.C. They are terrified of the debt America has accumulated over the last two years. They are willing to consider radical solutions like Paul Ryan's "Roadmap for America's Future." "I have a fear of creeping government influence, creeping socialism into our lives," says Sean Duffy. "And I think it's one of the battles of my generation. It's sad that we have to refight this battle. But it's coming back with a vengeance."

This is a group that came of age during the 25 years of barely interrupted prosperity between November 1982 and December 2007. The individuals in this group matured during America's "holiday from history" in the 1990s. They have not known the draft, or war on the scale of World War II, Korea, or Vietnam. But September 11 shattered their confidence that America would always be safe. And seven years later the financial crisis shattered their confidence that America would always be rich.

This one-two punch is refashioning American politics in unpredictable ways. What 9/11 did, says Duffy, is "shake the foundation of the sense of security that I grew up with." For instance, September 11 was a hinge event that motivated 32-year-old Adam Kinzinger, the GOP candidate in Illinois's 11th Congressional District, to join the Air National Guard and eventually serve in Iraq. But it took another hinge event, the 2008 financial collapse that empowered the Obama agenda, to motivate Kinzinger to run for Congress. His overriding issue is government power. Kinzinger's opponent, incumbent Democrat Debbie Halvorson, didn't hold any town halls last August to defend her support for Obamacare. Kinzinger held eight to explain why he was against it.

The ultimate irony is that President Obama, 48, is not only part of the generational turn, he's accelerating it. Obama promised a new politics, but his inexperience and ideology led him to cede power to the archons in Congress, experts in the old way of doing things. The liberal lions gloried in the return of the transactional welfare politics of their youth, but the public quickly soured on their policies. So the liberal restoration is bittersweet. Obama gave the old liberals one last chance to enact a decades-old agenda. But the future belongs to Sean Duffy. ♦

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They Just Want It Too Much

Why voters turned against Bennett and Specter and Crist. BY GEOFFREY NORMAN

According to news accounts, the man had tears in his eyes when he talked of coming in third in the voting. Merely reading about it makes one feel a little embarrassed for him. He is, after all, almost 77 years old, so he must have experienced misfortunes far worse than *this*. How many friends and loved ones must he have seen lowered into the cold ground? How many of his young dreams must have gone to dust? How many disappointments and failures must he have endured?

This was just one lousy election. So come on, man, you think, suck it up. Steal from the legendary political prankster Dick Tuck and say, "The people have spoken . . . the bastards." Or, if you want something more urbane, quote Adlai Stevenson, quoting Abraham Lincoln. "It hurts too much to laugh but I'm too old to cry."

Instead, after failing to win his party's nomination, Senator Robert Bennett of Utah said pitifully that he just might try to hold on to his seat in the Senate by running a write-in campaign. He would be running for a fourth term. When he first ran, he promised that he would serve only two.

That's how much he wants it.

Bennett says now that he wouldn't have voted any differently on some key legislation even if he had known that those votes would eventually cost him the job he craves so . . . well, so *cravenly*. Which is about as credible as that promise to serve only two terms.

Bennett wasn't the only one who reacted emotionally. The effrontery of the delegates to the Utah Republican convention was greeted with shock and indignation by the Washington elite. "A damn outrage," the *New York Times*'s David Brooks called it.

The man, according to this line of thought, was a good senator. Got along with people "across the aisle." He was, as they say, "someone who knows the institution." Which comes as no big surprise since his father was a four-term senator before him. The media postmortem on Bennett's defeat put the blame on the Tea Party movement, an increasingly anti-incumbent mood, and a generalized hostility to Washington. And if true . . . well, there may be reason for hope.

But there is a variation on the anti-Washington theme that might be worth exploring. Maybe voters wanted Bennett out because *he* wanted to be in so much. Who knows, those voters may have wondered, what sort of things someone who wants the job that badly might do to hold on to it? Desperation like that is not merely undignified; it can also be dangerous.

Bennett isn't, of course, the only one. Arlen Specter tried feverishly to remain a senator. Something he has been for so long now that you'd think he'd have grown bored with it and be ready to try something else, or just kick back and play with the grandchildren.

Specter never served out of allegiance to any particular cause or in order to advance any ideological line or to bolster the fortunes of any political party. He was always in it for Arlen. He was a Republican—sort of—until it began to look like he might have the same kind of troubles with his base that Bennett encountered. Then he bravely ditched the Republicans and went over to the Democrats. When he made the switch, Specter didn't bother to come up with any grand justification. Didn't try to strike a Road to Damascus chord. He simply said what everyone already knew; that he'd done it in order to keep his job.

Specter had spent half a lifetime as a Republican so even he must have had some friends in the party. So much the worse for them. Specter was clinging so desperately to that Senate seat that he left fingernail shards in the mahogany.

It didn't work, though. The voters in the Democratic primary last week took a pass on Arlen, in spite of his unremitting reminders of how much he'd done for them. In his concession speech, he said it had been a privilege to serve the people of Pennsylvania, and he almost sounded like he meant it.

But Specter is not the worst of the present crop. That distinction falls to Charlie Crist, the governor of Florida who would like to be a U.S. senator. Crist did everything but swear on a stack of Bibles that he would not leave the Republican party and run as an independent. But he was behind in the polls and did not have the luxury of waiting to see if he'd lose his party's primary. By then, it would be too late.

With time running out, Crist vetoed an education bill that had the backing of his party but was anathema to the teachers' union. The veto bought him a brand-new and very powerful constituency. That done, Crist announced he would be running as an independent. Asked if he would return contributions of those who believed, when they wrote the checks, that they were supporting a Republican, Crist said, "Probably."

Astonishingly, he changed his mind. It was, no doubt, a matter of high principle. He needed the money because he *really* wants the job.

Wants it, in fact, far too much to be trusted with it. A desperate pol is a dangerous pol. Which is something more and more voters who live out in the wastelands beyond the Potomac understand.

But in Washington, where there is no such thing as too much ambition, they're bewildered. ♦

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War Is No Joke

A West Point baccalaureate address.

BY RUTH R. WISSE

West Point

I feel exceptionally privileged to address the graduates at this West Point Jewish Baccalaureate Service.

Our society generally tries to spare its young, and prolongs adolescence beyond anything imagined by previous generations. Colleges increasingly act in the role of parents to protect students from conflict, and to keep them from harming themselves. We adults often prefer to sacrifice ourselves rather than to ask help from our children. But soldiering in the defense of the country is a service that only youth can perform. Any society that expects to remain strong and purposeful must have a viable defense, which depends on the young who train for that purpose. Consequently, there are no graduates whom we, as a society, respect more than those prepared to take the lead in protecting our freedoms. Coming as I do from a school where only a handful among several thousand undergraduates join the Reserve Officers Training Corps, I am honored to address graduates who take on military leadership as a matter of choice.

My appreciation also has a personal component. I teach Yiddish, the language and culture of European Jews and their descendants—the language and culture of people who had no independent means of self-defense. Yiddish was created and flourished before the rise of the State of Israel. Although by the end of the 19th century, thousands of Jews were serving in the armies of their respective countries, Yiddish expressed the predicament of Jews who lacked the means to fight on their own behalf. I wrote my doctoral dissertation on a character that embodies this dilemma, "The Schlemiel as Modern Hero." It begins with a joke:

The Battle of Tannenberg was fought at the start of World War I between the armies of Germany and Russia. The battle is at its height when a czarist officer announces to his company: "The moment has come! We're going to charge the enemy. It'll be man against man in hand-to-hand combat." A Jewish soldier in the company pipes up: "Please, sir. Show me my man! Maybe I can come to an understanding with him."

The soldier in this joke is a schlemiel—a man so naïve that he doesn't understand the premise of the fight into which he has been conscripted. The comedy pokes fun at his inexperience, but it also makes light of warfare that expects a man to fight. Such humor appeals to the child in us that doesn't want to engage in grown-up conflicts. Schlemiel jokes laugh away the threat that is otherwise real.

Here's another: Sometime during World War I, a Jew loses his way along the frontier. He is suddenly stopped by a border guard who shouts: "Halt, or I'll shoot!" The Jew blinks into the beam of the searchlight and says: "What the matter with you? Are you crazy? *Zest nit az do geyt a mentsh?* Can't you see that this is a human being?"

Hilarious in Yiddish, this joke hardly works in English, which has trouble imagining someone so unworldly that he cannot grasp that a man may be shot just for stepping on the wrong side of a border. The joke may likewise fall flat because we now know what happened to the people who created those jokes. They were slaughtered in the millions. What we call the Holocaust targeted precisely the population that created schlemiel comedy. We learned from that episode that sweetness was no laughing matter and that joking—which momentarily releases tension—offered no defense against real belligerents. The schlemiel who initially made us laugh also taught us to raise our guard.

When I wrote about the schlemiel in the 1960s, I had in mind the culture of Jews, but nowadays, we Americans similarly confront enemies who intend to destroy our way of life. Like the Jews of Europe, we are tempted to ignore them. We enjoy getting along with the rest of the world. We have no passion for war, favoring peace and prosperity. Like the schlemiel, some among us think that warfare is a ridiculous pursuit. So we may be tickled when an NCO asks: "Men, why do we soldier for our country?" and Private Katsenstein responds, "You're right, Sergeant, why do we?"

Those of you here who are graduating today know why we do. Yours is the doubled legacy of Jews and Americans who may appreciate better than anyone else the privileges of citizenship, and the training that is necessary for its protection. Thankfully, the Jews of today are able to defend themselves, and though we may laugh at the absurdities of war, most of us realize that until others stop nursing grievance and promoting violence we will have to confront their enmity.

America is free thanks to those who won its independence. It has come to represent the ideal of freedom only thanks to those who were prepared in body and spirit to champion that ideal. That means you, and those who came before you, and those who will follow your example. Builders must be stronger, wiser, and more creative than their would-be destroyers if they intend to keep even a fragile peace. This truth that Jews have learned at great cost is something Americans have always known.

That is why, in this season of convocation, we your relatives, friends, and well-wishers honor you who have trained for the armed forces, acting on the knowledge that radical innocence is no match for radical evil. ♦

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No Museum Left Behind

The relocation of the Barnes Foundation to downtown Philadelphia is fueled by ignorance and avarice, not altruism.

By Lance Esplund

Merion, Pennsylvania

Moving through the Barnes Foundation, you feel immersed in a complete work of art, as you do when deep in the nave of a Gothic cathedral. The Barnes seems wonderfully timeless and out of place. The world and the works of art are in sync. Mature trees can be viewed through tall windows—the arcs of their branches echoing pictures' arabesques. The only sounds are of the occasional bird outside, the measured movements of a handful of visitors, the creak of old parquet beneath your feet. Artworks flirt and flit. Parts of paintings, like flashes of jewels or glimpses of flesh, pull and lure you from one to the next.

No matter how much you know about the Barnes Foundation—no matter how often you've been told that it houses the most important collection of Impressionist, Postimpressionist, and early Modern art in the world—nothing, especially its deceptively small scale, prepares you for the experience inside the museum.

First, there is the artwork itself. The catalogue is staggering. Albert Barnes acquired Old Master paintings by Canaletto, Goya, Hals, El Greco, Titian, and Veronese and important examples of ancient Egyptian, Greco-Roman, Medieval, Native American, African, Near Eastern, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern art. Then there is the collection of Modern European works. One of the largest in existence, it includes pictures by Chagall, de Chirico, Daumier, Dufy, Gauguin, Klee, Marquet, Miró, Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes, Redon, Rouault, Signac, and Sisley. Barnes bought 11 works by Degas, seven by van Gogh, six by Seurat, four Manets, and four Monets. He purchased 18 Rousseaus and 46 Picassos. Barnes acquired 21 pictures by Soutine (whom he discovered). And it is no exaggeration to say that if you have not been to the Barnes, you have not seen Matisse, Cézanne, or, especially, Renoir. The collection holds 59 Matisses, 69 Cézannes, and a definitive 181 Renoirs. Barnes loved Renoir's miraculous late nudes—paintings whose rotund volumes and luminous flesh are as erotically charged as those of Rubens and Titian. And at the Barnes Foundation, where Rubens is stationed next to Renoir, who is in earshot of Matisse, Titian, and Bonnard, such comparisons are self-evident.

Henri Matisse, Seated Riffian *(1912)*

Yet the magnificence of the foundation is much greater than the sum of its masterpieces. The installation puts the nature and language—the very life—of art above any single work. Packed wall-to-wall, the collection is hung salon-style, without regard for the trappings of -isms, periods, or styles. Barnes, who oversaw every detail of the museum's creation, intermixed the past with the present and organized pictures and objects visually and thematically into ensembles. He created an environment that erased the business-as-usual distinctions between classical and primitive; ancient and modern; among applied, decorative, and fine arts. Paintings, drawings, and prints elbow one another as if to stand out from the crowd. And they

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The visitor's first sight of the Barnes's Main Gallery: Matisse's 1930 mural The Danse *floating above the painter's* Seated Riffian *(1912) and Picasso's* Composition: The Peasants *(1906)*

are surrounded by other captivating objects, including ironwork, textiles, pewter, pottery, African masks, Navajo rugs, turquoise jewelry, medieval carvings, illuminated manuscripts, early American furniture, and American folk art—yet another of Barnes's pioneering enthusiasms. Here, in this living museum where plastic formal values are made paramount, nothing is supplemental or taken for granted; everything is in chorus and plays its part.

Albert Coombs Barnes (1872–1951) believed that the chief value of a democratic society is that it enables every individual the unique opportunity to better himself culturally and spiritually. He thought the key to self-awareness is the study of art, philosophy, music, and literature. Driven by his love of art and ideas, he created a new species of museum. Barnes was not interested in amassing an art collection to bolster his ego or to impress his friends.

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Although he collected a wide array of art and artifacts, he was not interested in creating an encyclopedic or national collection like that of the then-burgeoning Metropolitan Museum of Art. And although he was a passionate advocate of the European avant-garde (Barnes wrote extensive critical monographs on Renoir, Cézanne, and Matisse), he was not primarily concerned, as was the Museum of Modern Art (founded in 1929), with introducing that group of artists to the American public. Barnes's interest was in the living nature of artworks. He set up dialogues among works of various periods and diverse styles to emphasize similarities where most museums emphasize the distinctions. Barnes understood that the ancient Greeks, Titian, Rubens, Renoir, and Matisse, far from disconnected, are links in the chain.

Barnes wanted people to appreciate how artists think; how artists are inspired; how art furthers art. He strove to emphasize a work's sublime, as opposed to its mimetic, values. In his writings, he compared learning to see to learning a foreign language and stressed that through the act of developing our senses, our perceptions are heightened and our lives made richer. "Vision and intelligence," Barnes wrote, "are co-implicative, neither is possible without the other, and all growth involves their interaction."

> This general principle furnishes us with the clue to esthetic education. We perceive only what we have learned to look for, both in life and in art . . . to appreciate [a] painting . . . we must reconstruct [the artist's] experience, so far as we are able, in ourselves. . . . To see as the artist sees is an accomplishment to which there is no short cut, which cannot be acquired by any magic formula or trick; it requires not only the best energies of which we are capable, but a methodical direction of those energies, based upon scientific understanding of the meaning of art and its relation to human nature. The artist illuminates the objective world for us, exactly as does the scientist, different as the terms are in which he envisages it; art is as little a plaything, a matter of caprice or uncontrolled subjectivity as is physics or chemistry.

To this end Barnes created an environment where aesthetic values override all others, where viewers are encouraged to make visual connections: to discover that a Matisse or Picasso nude could have walked directly off of a Greek vase. That van Gogh's immanent frontality—his volumetric figures held within flat planes of yellow—is no different from that of a Byzantine madonna held within planes of flat gold leaf. That, moreover, van Gogh's nervous, swirling line and compartmentalized spaces are equally related to early Netherlandish painting, Japanese prints, and Impressionism. That art, like human nature, is not linear but cyclical.

Barnes wanted to empower people to experience art—and, by extension, life—at its most profound levels. In 1930, when Matisse first visited the foundation, he wrote in his notebook that it was "the only sane" place to view art in America. That same year, he remarked in an interview:

> One of the most striking things in America is the Barnes collection, which is exhibited in a spirit very beneficial for the formation of American artists. . . . This collection presents the paintings in complete frankness, which is not frequent in America. The Barnes Foundation will doubtless manage to destroy the artificial and disreputable presentation of the

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other collections, where the pictures are hard to see—displayed hypocritically in the mysterious light of a temple or cathedral. According to the current American aesthetic, this presentation seeks to introduce a certain supposedly favorable mystery between the spectator and the work, but it is in the end only a great misunderstanding.

But Matisse was overly optimistic. The Barnes Foundation never influenced other museums and remained a completely unique institution immune from the postwar homogenization of the American museum establishment. Over the years, though, it became a target of that establishment which coveted the art that Barnes had acquired long before it became fashionable. Now after years of litigation, Albert Barnes's intentions have been subverted and his will broken. And the Barnes Foundation is scheduled to be moved. Galleries have already been closed. Ground broken. Pictures crated. The thousands of artworks are all being uprooted from their home in Merion, Pennsylvania, a leafy suburb 20 minutes from downtown Philadelphia, and transplanted to the mall on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway next to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Advocates claim the relocation is being done in the name of progress, conservation, civic responsibility, and convenience. It all sounds benign enough if you fail to consider that the Barnes Foundation, unlike almost every other museum in the world, is a rooted organism. Yes, the artworks will arrive in Philadelphia, but the museum—the experience of its art—will be irreversibly maimed. And with its move there will be considerable collateral damage extending to the broader areas of museum stewardship, museum donors, and the public trust. Besides violating the legal will and stated intentions of the foundation's sole benefactor—who stipulated that no work in his collection ever be loaned, deaccessioned, or moved from the building he had designed for it; that no object ever stray, not even an inch, from the precise spot in which he had personally placed it—the move is an unforgivable act that disregards the true purpose of museums.

The Barnes Foundation was established in 1922 as a nondiscriminatory school for art and philosophy. Its two-story Renaissance-style building was completed in 1925 and, ensconced in a 12-acre arboretum, sits deep within a sloping yard behind a wrought iron fence, surrounded by lilac groves, formal rose and perennial gardens, and one of the finest collections of ferns and rare trees in America. Designed by Paul Philippe Cret, the building is itself a distinguished work of art. Barnes had commissioned Jacques Lipchitz to carve eight sculptures and used them for the museum's exterior. Enfield Pottery and Tile Works fabricated the entrance to Barnes's specifications, incorporating motifs from works in his African art collection. (While other museums were displaying African tribal objects as ethnographic artifacts, Barnes, like Braque and Picasso, recognized their aesthetic value.) The entrance is an eclectic interplay of Neoclassicism, Primitivism, and Modernism. Doric columns, Arts & Crafts ceramics, and African-inspired and Modern sculpture—the last, Barnes well understood, in debt to the former—intermingle. You know immediately you are entering a world where hierarchies and cultural identities dissolve and where art, no matter when or where it was made, is in concert.

The art is installed in a suite of 24 interconnected galleries of varying dimensions spread over two floors and the refined, intimate spaces make it as much manor as museum. Picture by picture, room by room, juxtaposition by juxtaposition, you get to know what Barnes was trying to convey about the nature of art. Though sequentially numbered, the galleries are in no discernible order. And there are no distracting wall labels. If you are interested in who, what, where, or when, each gallery is equipped with laminated photographs of its walls, each labeled with names, dates, titles, and provenance.

It is the Main Gallery—the central trunk and heart of the Barnes—from which all the other galleries are fed and grow, literally and metaphorically, across disciplines and time. Though the largest room at the Barnes, the Main Gallery is small by modern museum standards, only 53 feet long and just over 22 feet wide. Yet its vaulted ceiling, which rises 33 feet, gives the space the loftiness of a cathedral. And its installation is built upward and across like a stained-glass window (specifically a Tree of Jesse, one of the most constant subjects of Western art, linking the Barnes to both Chartres and the Sistine Chapel). Barnes envisioned the museum as a family album, in which artworks relate to one another like sisters, brothers, and cousins. Familial resemblances are emphasized, without ever detracting from the individual work of art. Barnes understood that artists are inspired by numerous impressions from disparate sources. In his museum, one does not receive a lesson in art history; rather, one joins into a meditation on art.

Entering the Main Gallery you are confronted with pivotal paintings by the two pillars of 20th-century art. A Rose-period Picasso, *Composition: The Peasants* (1906), hangs between the windows to your right. In soft pinks, powder blues, and warm grays, it alerts us to the predawn of Cubism. Its faceted figure grouping of oxen, a girl, and a man with a basket of flowers on his head feels like a bas-relief. These are not just peasants but as much Greek god and goddess strutting through the plane as a single organism.

Near the Picasso, between the windows to your left, hangs a Moroccan-period Matisse: *Seated Riffian* (1912). Nearly abstract, in dazzling, saturated hues, the painting's

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The west wall of the Main Gallery featuring Seurat's Models *(1886-88) and Cézanne's* Card Players *(1890-92)*

jewel-like colors and the figure's majestic pose equally suggest a precious gem and the portrait of a king. The painting's transparent, light-filled curtains and vertically striped planes, resembling the mullions, curtains, and glass of its neighboring windows, appear to punctuate the architecture of the Main Gallery. The Matisse and Picasso—changing peasants into deities, ruffians into royalty, and walls into windows—attest not only to the transformative power of painting, but to the transformative power of this museum.

Above the two paintings, as if anchored by and unfurled from those below, is Matisse's Dionysiac mural *The Dance* (1932-33), spanning more than 45 feet across three lunettes. Commissioned by Barnes in 1930, it is among Matisse's greatest and largest works. Matisse took into consideration that *The Dance* would be experienced alongside very specific paintings and views of sky and garden seen through the windows (which were often left open during spring, summer, and fall). The painter allowed nature's greens to complement painted pink, for blue sky to speak to sky blue, and for *The Dance*, as graphic and bold as it is, to blend with spring's rapture and the blaze of fall foliage. Matisse formed beings that merge woman with goddess and succeed in transforming gallery into spiritual setting. The mural is a celebration of art that, moreover, unifies nature, artworks, and architecture at the Barnes Foundation.

Moving laterally—a combination of thrust and counterthrust, of anchor and loft—*The Dance*'s eight large, soft-gray female nudes spread across the three lunettes like acrobats. The nudes appear to billow and bulge within the vaulted arcs of the architecture. They are goddesses, caryatids, and flying buttresses. They are grounded, held to the walls, by flat, sharp-edged planes of black and blue, and they are aerated by planes of pink. The nudes swell into ecstatic volumes and tumble through the arches across the upper wall, opening the architecture and penetrating the dome of the ceiling. It is as if they have fallen from the sky and been caught in the gallery's net. They are the soul of the Barnes collection and the engine that animates the whole installation.

Matisse observed of his mural that "from the floor of the gallery one will feel it rather than see it, as it gives the sense of sky above the green conveyed by the windows. . . . [The great hall] is a room for paintings: to treat my decoration like another picture would be out of place. My aim has been to translate paint into architecture, to make of the fresco the equivalent of stone." Barnes, who had given Matisse complete freedom to paint the lunettes however he desired, at once knew the significance of *The Dance*: "One would call the place a cathedral now," he told Matisse after the mural

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was installed. "Your painting is like the rose window." Matisse agreed and added that *The Dance* "is like a song that mounts to the vaulted roof."

Facing *The Dance* are 11 paintings by Cézanne and 22 by Renoir, mostly the latter's pearlescent late nudes—as soft as feathers, as iridescent as gems, as weighty as great oaks. Crowning a dozen paintings on the east wall, including a Tintoretto, a Corot, and a work attributed to Chardin, is Cézanne's monumental *Large Bathers* (1900-05). This painting, summoning equally the Parthenon and Poussin, is somewhere between procession and pastoral. Its eight luminous female nudes, an animated and restless frieze, bathe and towel themselves in a dappled blue-and-green-shaded glade. Looking back and forth between the frieze of eight figures in *Large Bathers* and the frieze of eight above in Matisse's *The Dance*, it is nearly impossible not to feel that the bathers and the dancers are related—implying before and after, immersion and emancipation, rest and flight.

The connections are ever apparent. Corot, Courbet, Impressionism, and Cézanne freed Matisse and Picasso to reinvent the art of the 19th century for the 20th century. But Modernism's roots, Barnes understood, go much deeper. As a beginning painter, Matisse made his first copies in the Louvre of Chardin. And, as Barnes himself wrote, Picasso's *Composition: The Peasants* was a reinvention of El Greco's faceted, fractured space—that El Greco was a spur to Cubism. Renoir brings us full circle. Though initially seduced by Impressionism's miraculous pyrotechnics, Renoir eventually saw it as a "blind alley." He sought to reinvest Impressionism's atomized light with the structure and geometry of the Old Masters. Looking back, specifically to Rubens, Renoir opened the doors for Cézanne's own return (through Poussin) to the cube, the cone, and the sphere—the building blocks of Cubism, which shattered Renaissance space and led to Modern abstraction.

Renoir, although he was too grounded in his love of the female form to become an abstract artist, sympathized with the aims of Kandinsky. Renoir, too, dreamed of dispensing completely with the world of things in his pictures. He relished the complete freedom of abstraction (and he understood his role, as well as that of Picasso and Matisse, respectively, in the movement toward nonobjective painting). But Renoir recognized also that the fruits of abstract art belonged to the next generation. Late in Renoir's life, Matisse visited him. "In all truthfulness," Renoir told the younger painter, "I don't like what you do. I'd almost like to say that you are not a good painter, or even that you are a very bad painter. But one thing prevents me from doing this: When you put black on the canvas it stays in its plane. . . . So, in spite of my feeling, I think that you are most surely a painter." Barnes's installation, especially his pairings of Matisse with Renoir and Seurat with Cézanne, acknowledges and reiterates the language and interconnectedness of art—the links between Renoir and Rubens, Matisse and Renoir, Picasso and El Greco.

Paul Cézanne, Card Players *(1890-92)*

On the other end, the west wall, among an ensemble of smaller works by Cézanne, Corot, and Rousseau, are two further monumental paintings: Cézanne's *Card Players* (1890-92) and, hanging directly above it, Seurat's large *Models* (1886-88). Together they demonstrate how specific pictures appear to have been made in answer to one another—as if in a magical world of call and response—and set in motion an idea that radiates throughout the whole of the collection. Barnes lays out the story of Modernism here. He reminds us that Seurat's Pointillist, neoclassical haze; Renoir's love of mass, shimmer, and curve; Chardin's plainspoken volumes; Cézanne's fractured though solid geometries; Picasso's ruptured plane; and Matisse's spare, buoyant eroticism are all interrelated and interdependent.

The Card Players depicts three men at a table, while a man and a child face us and observe the game. It combines multiple genres: The picture's tabletop is both still life and landscape; the figure grouping, like a mountain, evokes Cézanne's paintings of Mont Sainte-Victoire; and the wall holds its plane yet opens into sky-like airiness. And the whole elevates a card game to the level of history painting.

Cézanne is the father of Modern art, and, at the Barnes, he is repeatedly given pride of place. More viscerally than any other Modern painter, Cézanne got at the existential nature of seeing. He refused to ground us in a single fixed viewpoint, instead exploring relationships, relativity, and the act of seeing—of changing focus and location—as much as he explored the objects he depicted. In *The Card Players*, Cézanne continually moves our point of view and depth of

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field, creating shifting spatial pockets that force viewers to bounce constantly from location to location, from viewpoint to viewpoint. Cézanne breaks down forms into tessellating, anxious geometries—the building blocks of pictures. His works link the shivering, fiery contours of Renoir and the twinkling Pointillism of Seurat to the planar faceting and pared-down geometry of Cubism. Like Seurat, Cézanne got solid form one step closer to abstract flight.

Seurat's *Models* pays homage to the nature of picture-making—a bountiful theme taken up by artists as diverse as Velázquez, Vermeer, Braque, Klee, and Balthus. Seurat depicted three nude models in a studio interior. On the left of the painting, leaning against the studio wall, and providing backdrop and window, is Seurat's now-famous landscape *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1884-86, Art Institute of Chicago). Cluttering the studio are parasols, clothes, and still life objects—props recognizable from many Seurat paintings. The central nude is life-size. She faces viewers and, with a tilt of her head, seems to contemplate us as much as we contemplate her. The other two models, flanking her, are seated. One, adjusting her stocking, is in profile. The third has her back to us. Bridging landscape and interior, she actually leans into the space of *La Grande Jatte*. Together, they suggest the Three Graces—another ageless theme, oft engaged—but also an artist pondering the same model in the separate states of posing, dressing, and undressing. The standing nude is the muse of the Main Gallery at the Barnes. She links picture, subject, and viewer.

Like the figurehead of a ship, she pulls the entire interior forward, warping the perspective of the room and reiterating the artifice of painting and the flatness of the canvas—as a picture unfolds within a picture; and the nature of picture-making unfolds within the great hall at the Barnes. The Seurat and the Cézanne appear to spill out of and support each other. In the Barnes's hanging, Seurat's central nude seems to have grown straight out of the pyramidal base of the Cézanne. Taken as a pair, the two paintings, broken down into primary elements—color, line, simple geometric forms, genres, and layered metaphoric themes—present to us all the necessary ingredients of painting. At the Barnes, it is impossible not to feel on some deep level that all of the artworks are instrumental; that, despite their relative merits (some works are, of course, stronger than others), they form a choir in which all voices contribute to the greater song of art.

A medical doctor and chemist, Albert Barnes made a fortune marketing Argyrol, a breakthrough antiseptic drug. At the beginning of the 20th century, he began collecting Modern European paintings—works that very few people then acknowledged as art. Initially, he sent his friend and former classmate the painter William Glackens to Europe to buy pictures for him. In time, empowered by his newfound love of Modern painting, he went on his own buying sprees at galleries and auction houses. Barnes frequently traveled to Europe, where he got to know Leo and Gertrude Stein, who introduced him to Picasso. He avidly collected Matisse, Cézanne, and Picasso long before the scandalous 1913 Armory Show introduced the European avant-garde to the United States and caused these artists to be branded charlatans and degenerates.

Barnes had been inspired by the ideas of William James and John Dewey—whose lectures on scientific education Barnes attended at Columbia University in 1918. Barnes and Dewey became friends who shared and furthered each other's ideas and philosophies. Dewey stressed the importance of learning by doing and of education as a means of investigation and inquiry. Education did not, in Dewey's estimation, amount to the acquisition of facts but to the strengthening of one's perceptive and cogitative skills. Barnes applied Dewey's methods to looking at art, his study of which was grounded not in theory but in everyday experience. Dewey, in turn, learned from Barnes how to look at art, both ancient and modern, and was applying Barnes's perceptions when he developed the philosophy he put forth in *Art as Experience* (1934), a book dedicated to Barnes. Dewey held that aesthetic experience and life experience are inseparable and cultivate one another:

> In order to *understand* the aesthetic in its ultimate and approved forms, one must begin with it in the raw; in the events and scenes that hold the attentive eye and ear of man, arousing his interest and affording him enjoyment as he looks and listens: the sights that hold the crowd—the fire engine rushing by; the machines excavating enormous holes in the earth; the human-fly climbing the steeple-side; the men perched high in air on girders, throwing and catching red-hot bolts. The sources of art in human experience will be learned by him who sees how the tense grace of the ball-player infects the onlooking crowd; who notes the delight of the housewife in tending her plants, and the intent interest of her goodman in tending the patch of green in front of the house; the zest of the spectator in poking the wood burning on the hearth and in watching the darting flames and crumbling coals. These people, if questioned as to the reason for their actions, would doubtless return reasonable answers. The man who poked the sticks of burning wood would say he did it to make the fire burn better; but he is none the less fascinated by the colorful drama of change enacted before his eyes and imaginatively partakes in it.

The foundation has its origins in a free lending library of Modern literature at Barnes's factory, where he also first exhibited his art collection. He cut the work day to six hours and utilized paintings as discussion topics during seminars he initiated for his employees (educated or not; black and white welcome), to help them comprehend art, literature, and aesthetics. Barnes's classes on how to approach art,

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which stressed that the art of the present was inextricably linked to that of the past, eventually attracted people from outside the factory. In 1922, Barnes was granted a charter for an educational institution, and he named Dewey as the foundation's first director of education.

When Barnes opened the doors of his foundation in 1925, besides more than 700 European and American pictures, his collection included a substantial assortment of African tribal art—a relatively little known and unexplored subject to which the Barnes Foundation would devote the first book of its kind, *Primitive Negro Sculpture* (1926). Barnes was a strong advocate for civil rights. He collected and supported the work of African-American artists and donated money to Lincoln University, a small African-American college. He invited black students to see his art collection, and black choirs to sing in his galleries, making connections between African art and African-American music. And he was instrumental in recording and preserving the spirituals of the Deep South, which he had loved since childhood. Barnes believed that the black spirituals, born out of slavery, were the supreme American art form, "because they came out of the soil and, like the greatest artistic achievements of the Middle Ages—the Cathedrals—they are an outgrowth of community life inspired by religion." In 1929, when his education program was in full swing, Barnes sold his company (characteristically just three months before the Wall Street stock market collapse) and devoted himself fulltime to the foundation.

Barnes expounded his ideas in essays and in his books, particularly *The Art in Painting* (1925), and to read his writings is to be amazed again and again by this medical man's visual intelligence and his insight into the intentions of artists. But Barnes's brilliance played itself out best in his collection's installation. Here his insights take on a living form.

Standing in the Main Gallery, and looking into the adjacent Gallery VII, you have a perfect sightline to a racy Courbet *Nude* (1864), the central painting among a grouping of a dozen works on the east wall. The Courbet depicts a woman seated on the ground in a landscape. Like the seated model in Seurat's *Models*, she is either pulling on or pulling off her stocking, and, like Seurat's standing female nude, she eyes us from across the room. She is exposed and vulnerable, like the nudes in Cézanne's *Bathers*. And, like those in Matisse's *Dance*, she is lost in ecstasy. A charged intimacy shines forth from both the sexual exposure of her pose and the boudoir-scale of the gallery, from which she seems to call. Facing us with her legs apart, she has one foot crossed over her raised knee. Her body, burning red at its center and around the edges, levitates slightly above the ground, as if she were offering herself and rising toward us. Both to emphasize and relieve the erotic tension, Barnes introduced other elements into the ensemble. Among them, directly below the Courbet, is a Pennsylvania-German chest of drawers. Painted on the face of the chest are tulips and an inscribed heart, which mirrors the exact size and shape—an inverted heart—of the Courbet nude's buttocks. And flanking the chest is a pair of andirons, which lend to the nude and to her sex the quality of a glowing hearth.

Such associations, interactions, and extended metaphors can be found in every gallery at the Barnes. In a Braque still life in Gallery X, impastoed pears echo the impastoed thighs in an adjacent Matisse odalisque—fruit and flesh become interchangeable. In Gallery XII, a painted rooster on an earthenware jug calls our attention to a prancing horse on a beach in a Prendergast seascape. In Gallery XIII, the spindles in the back of an early American chair splay like the tree branches in a Cézanne landscape. In Gallery XIV, a Pennsylvania-German dower chest, decorated with flora, sits below and anchors a large Rousseau jungle scene. Both landscape and chest appear to have come from the hand of the same painter. And in Gallery XV, a Tanagra figure moves like a Lipchitz nude, and an ancient terra cotta bird and the plump bowls of Greco-Roman vases echo the rotundity in the swollen hips and thighs of a Renoir nude.

Hands are the overarching theme of a whole wall of works in Gallery XVI. The grouping includes landscapes by Derain and Claude; Spanish, German, and Flemish religious scenes and portraits; Egyptian relief carvings; and a vitrine filled with dozens of Greco-Roman vases and figurines. In the Claude—the largest work on the wall—a tiny figure, her hand illuminated like a twinkling star against the darkness of the landscape, points upward. That hand calls attention to the hands in every picture and object in the gallery, directing you on an unexpected journey. The supplicating hands in an Egyptian relief flutter in the plane, rippling the stone like water and alerting us to the swirling grain of a maple end table. The Egyptian hands, though abstract, are as expressive, active, and pictorially dominant as the hand of the Christ who blesses us in a 15th-century German *Resurrection* or the hand of Saint Catherine, who blesses Pope Gregory XI. In the corner of the next room, Gallery XV, the prominent, bright hand in a 19th-century American *Portrait of a Man*, seeming to have just been released by that in an Egyptian carving, leads you onward.

Barnes, moreover, orchestrated the artworks to intermingle with hundreds of meticulously placed pieces of old ironwork. At the foundation, the blacksmith and metalworker are honored alongside the weaver, potter, sculptor, and painter. Attached directly to the galleries' walls, among and between the pictures, are a plethora of keys, locks, hinges, latches, door knockers, hooks, handles, tools,

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The grouping on the east wall of Gallery VII, centered around Gustave Courbet's Nude *(1864)*

pulls, weather vanes, and kitchen utensils. There's a giant key hanging above Claude's *Pastoral Landscape*, which may have originally been a shop sign. The ironwork provides a teeming garden of filigree, curlicues, curves, and crenulations—an endless interplay of decorative shapes and symbols. Climbing like vines and flames (like van Gogh's cypresses), they unite (and reiterate) the undulations, arabesques, movements, and rhythms in the art and architecture. They alert us to what's going on inside the pictures' ornate frames; and they connect artwork to artwork—zooming and darting our eyes around, among, and through compositions, as if the good doctor were right there, directing our eyes with a pointer.

The ironworks add levity. They energize the galleries and activate pictures with accents, ribbons, flourishes, and bows. Some pieces appear to shoot outward from the canvases like roots, stalks, fireworks, or signal flares. Others appear to jiggle and dance. Some are as regal as coats of arms. In one gallery, a lock and a very phallic key are suggestively placed next to a nude. At times the ironwork pieces top ornately gilded frames like preposterous plumage on overstuffed hats; they act as tongs or pokers ready to pinch and prod; and on occasion they resemble those disembodied canes that reach out from behind vaudeville curtains to pluck unsuspecting actors from the stage.

Above a Renoir nude in Gallery V is a piece of ironwork that, cross-shaped and comical, resembles an abstract wiry figure with arms outstretched and wiggling fingers. Renoir's nude has lowered her towel to reveal her bare behind; and the ironwork figure appears to be calling attention to her disrobing. On the same wall is Gerard David's *Crucifixion with the Virgin, St. John, and the Magdalene* (c. 1485). Christ's crucified outstretched arms mimic those of the abstract metalwork figure. We are alerted to the formal dynamic tension—the vertical and horizontal extension—in both works of art. And the disembodied metalwork figure emphasizes Christ's own forward suspension in the painting. Directly below the *Crucifixion*, sitting on the floor, is an early American spinning wheel. It has the proportions of a child: Its cogwheel resembles a large head, and its supports resemble arms that extend upward—echoing the arms of Christ in the David. Suddenly, we are aware of every form that reaches upward in the gallery, including the splayed paws in Soutine's *Flayed Rabbit* (c. 1921), a painting whose metaphor, plainly obvious in context, is that of the crucifixion.

In 1923, Barnes showed 75 of his School of Paris works at the Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. They were ridiculed, and the vitriolic reception gave Barnes a deep distaste for the academic establishment and well-heeled Philadelphia society. He became very particular about who entered his collection. Barnes once told an interviewer: "The students have to be in earnest. Prestige

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doesn't count. Ph.D. or Harvard are zero to us. If the student doesn't have the interest or the ability, he is dead as far as we are concerned, and gets the gate." Barnes enlisted his dog, Fidèle-de-Port-Manech, as his personal secretary. He wrote letters in her voice in answer to all written requests for entry to the Barnes Foundation. Fidèle's responses, each signed with a paw mark and full of references to "my master," are hilariously condescending. Among those turned away by the pooch were T.S. Eliot, Meyer Schapiro, and Le Corbusier. And once you got in the door, Barnes might be posing as a janitor scrubbing the foyer floor. If he heard you ridicule the art, artists, or installation, you too got "the gate."

For years, most Philadelphians couldn't have cared less that they were unable to set foot in the Barnes. But money changes everything. When Impressionist and Postimpressionist art became fashionable and acceptable in America, and the financial value of the Barnes collection (conservatively appraised today at $20 billion to $30 billion) became widely known, a move was set afoot to open it to the public and, eventually, to bring the collection to Philadelphia.

Barnes's untimely death in a car accident in 1951 left control of the foundation to Violette de Mazia, his most trusted disciple and coauthor on many books, his widow Laura, and Lincoln University. But in 1952, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and its publisher, Walter Annenberg—who maintained a life-long animus to the Barnes and whose own foundation is playing a key role in the removal of the collection—filed suit in his managing editor's name, challenging the Barnes's bylaws and regulations, as well as its tax-exempt status as a public institution. Albert Barnes had been in battle with the *Inquirer* for decades but now was unable to fight back. A thorough investigation into the foundation was undertaken, art "experts" were consulted, and in 1961 the doors of the Barnes were forced open. It was decided that a public institution could not be limited to a selected and restricted few. Hours were extended and 200 people were to be allowed in per day. Already, Barnes's devotees, who immediately understood that the foundation was in danger, protested with a flyer that began: "NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: DESTROYING OUR EDUCATIONAL FACILITY IS NOT BUILDING OUR CULTURE."

Once the public had access, the public began complaining. They did not want to check their coats and bags. They wanted tours, postcards, and catalogues, as well as labels and spotlights for the pictures. They wondered why children under 12 were not admitted. Journalists complained that no color reproductions of works in the collection were allowed to illustrate published articles on the Barnes. (Although color printing was continually improving, well into the 1960s black and white reproductions—which did less than those in color to distort the true nature of works of art—were preferred by scholars. And Barnes held to the belief that paintings needed to be seen in the flesh.) De Mazia tried to keep Barnes's wishes.

When de Mazia died in 1988, all bets were off. In 1990, Richard H. Glanton, counsel to Lincoln University, took over as the foundation's president. He diversified investments, raised the admission price, and changed policy so that the galleries could be utilized for social gatherings and parties. He tried to deaccession works to pay for operating costs and to bolster the endowment—an act forbidden not just in the Barnes Foundation's charter but to all museums under the tenets of the American Association of Museums. Glanton was not granted permission to sell works, but he had successfully changed the Barnes from an educational institution into a marketable commodity.

In 1993, the exhibition "Great French Paintings from the Barnes Foundation," accompanied by a lavish color catalogue, opened at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. Although it went against Barnes's will, the show was justified as raising money for needed repairs and to strengthen the endowment. The larger purpose, according to its catalogue, was to reach "everyone to whom the paintings in the Barnes Foundation have been a legend—unattainable—and for every devotee of great art and beautiful books." The exhibit traveled to Paris, Tokyo, Fort Worth, Toronto, and Munich, with its last stop—supposedly because the Barnes in Merion remained "unattainable" to Philadelphians—at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

When the foundation reopened in 1995, it had audio guides and a gift shop that sold coffee mugs, T-shirts, color reproductions, and jewelry. A gallery referred to as the "Dutch Room," housing decorative arts, had disappeared and an elevator taken its place. With increased visitors came pollution and traffic. The Barnes's neighbors understandably complained: Tour buses blocked their driveways; fast food wrappers littered their lawns, which were trampled by tourists. They sued and the Barnes countersued, claiming racism (Glanton is black). Nearly $6 million of the Barnes's endowment was spent on attorney fees in Glanton's endless litigation. The Barnes was suddenly broke. When Glanton was not reelected, a new president was instated. Admission fees were again increased; a parking lot was added; 1,200 visitors were allowed in per week. But those in charge were truly only interested in the final solution.

And all the while the Barnes's enemies and detractors—led by Pennsylvania governor Edward G. Rendell, then-Philadelphia mayor John Street, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Lenfest and Annenberg Foundations, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art—kept after it. They were willing to offer the Barnes aid, but only after it had become a Philadelphia tourist attraction. In 2002, the Barnes filed a petition, granted in 2004 by Montgomery County Orphan's Court Judge Stanley M. Ott, to move the collection to Phila-

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A grouping from Gallery X featuring a Matisse odalisque in the center and a Georges Braque still life of pears to the right

delphia. Lincoln University was bribed out of its inherited responsibility with state funding. Although the advocacy group Friends of the Barnes Foundation (barnesfriends.org) continues to mount a strong opposition, the odds are against them. The final victory of Philadelphia's establishment over Albert Barnes is in sight.

The art dealer Richard L. Feigen, who was dismissed from the Barnes Foundation's art advisory committee by Glanton in 1991 because he refused to support the deaccessioning plans, eloquently summarized the deceptiveness of the Barnes move in the *Art Newspaper*:

> One could wonder whether the only reason not to homogenize the Frick Collection into the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Gardner Museum into the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Phillips Collection into the National Gallery of Art, is that they have endowments large enough to keep predators at bay. . . . The arguments for this foolish project are specious. The present Barnes building could easily be made more accessible. Hours could be extended. Shuttle-buses could run continuously from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a short 4.6 miles away. . . . Insufficient effort[s have] been made to tap private resources for the old Barnes . . . to sell the redundant real estate of Barnes's valuable farm, its 19th-century American pottery collection or unrestricted paintings in the offices, which have been appraised at more than $30m. Despite its claims that the Barnes had run through its money and had to be "saved," the establishment did not really want to "save" it, only steal it.

The building in Merion, which will remain open through June 2011 (though its entire second floor will close the first of January), is slated to become an archival center. The new Barnes is scheduled to open in downtown Philadelphia by 2012. Rebranded as the Barnes Foundation Art Education Center, it will not follow the museum's original footprint. It will be bigger—able to accommodate a projected four times the number of annual visitors, roughly 250,000 people. While the new Barnes's galleries will supposedly replicate the scale, proportion, and configuration of the existing galleries, it will be through a Frankenstein's monster-like revivification. And though almost all of the artworks are to be reinstalled as they were in Merion, there are exceptions. The greatest casualties are those objects and pictures on the balcony and in the stairwell. These include

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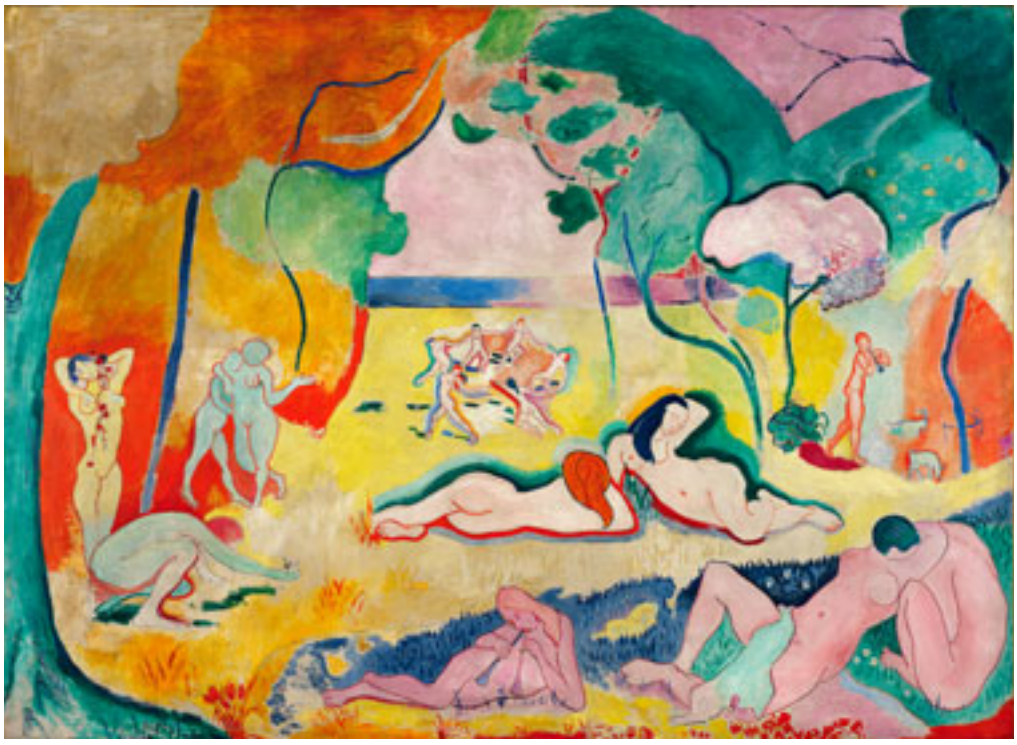
Matisse's Fauvist masterpiece *The Joy of Life* (1905-06), one of the most important works of Modern art, fully equal to MoMA's famed Picasso *Demoiselles d'Avignon*. Barnes positioned *The Joy of Life* directly above the stairwell landing (midway between the first and second floors), where it ingeniously emphasizes the painting's pivotal place—linking the arabesques of Ingres to the free line of Kandinsky—in the movement from representation to abstraction. It also prepares you for the glorious view of *The Dance* from the second-floor loggia. In Philadelphia, *The Joy of Life*, along with other misfit works, will be moved—like an addendum—to a new second-floor gallery just off the balcony.



Henri Matisse, The Joy of Life *(1905-06)*

The new Barnes will also provide a substantial increase in space for programs, classes, seminars, traveling exhibitions, and special events; an auditorium, indoor and outdoor gardens, a fountain, and a restaurant; a larger retail store and increased parking, as well as expanded space for conservation, research, and administration. Three of these new large rooms will be wedged between suites of galleries in the museum. On the west side will be two classrooms, one per floor, which will each separate three galleries from those in the central museum. On the east side will be a three-story indoor garden performing the same feat of dislocation. These classrooms and garden will compete with the scale of the Main Gallery and disrupt the original flow and sightlines between galleries—Barnes's spectacular and well thought-out views that lure and entice you from, for example, the forms in a particular Cézanne in one gallery to those in a particular Cézanne or Courbet or Renoir in the next; from lemon yellow to cobalt-violet; from hand to hand and from nude to nude; from fruit to breast; flower to figure; curve to curve to curve. Such experiences are being sacrificed for retailing opportunities and visitor amenities. Nothing could be further from what Albert Barnes started his foundation to achieve.

For while the Barnes Foundation may be accepted and its pioneering collection desired, it is still not well understood. One art critic told me that during a sponsored press trip to the Barnes to promote the 1993 traveling exhibition, critics from major publications stood around giggling, bewildered by and ultimately dismissive of the installation. An art historian who has not been to the Barnes told me that she had heard the installation was "a distraction from the art." These are the types of arts professionals—the philistines and academics—whom Barnes wanted to keep out of his museum.

It is such people who are hell-bent on turning museums into shopping malls with ease of access to the "customer." Through homogenization and expansion, they have already ruined once-great institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Morgan Library. There is a belief that getting more people in the door is a museum's prime function. As early as the 1930s, Barnes warned about individuals who supposedly are on the side of art but who "mistake the husk for the kernel, the shadow for the substance." Unfortunately, these are increasingly the people in charge of our museums. Barnes gave life to a unique institution, and its present-day stewards should be obligated to follow the ethical oath of others (medical doctors and art conservators among them) entrusted with the care of the living: First, do no harm. The relocation of the Barnes is disguised as altruism, but it is fueled solely by ignorance and avarice.

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Museums are peculiar places. While the great national collections and the vast universal museums are essential to a country's cultural life, so, too, are its small, idiosyncratic venues. But with every renovation, museums are becoming less peculiar. Initially "*Wünderkammer*" or "cabinets of curiosity," museums have existed for barely 400 years. Repositories of art and artifacts, they bring us riches from ancient civilizations and faraway lands. But they are much more than collections of cultural fragments, and their role is greater than that of simply caretaker. Museums are accountable also as caretakers for our relationship to art.

Art evolves as we evolve. And as art evolves so, the argument goes, must museums: No Museum Left Behind. Museums are the principal nurturers of our engagement with art, dictating not only what art is but also the environment and decorum surrounding it. And art is dependent upon the life we allow it. Before the museum, there was no such thing as art: statues, fetishes, masks, and pictures were tools and never meant to be elevated to pedestals. The primary weakness of the museum is that through its displacement of objects from their original contexts, things are disavowed of their functions and disempowered of their magical properties. Statues become sculptures, crucifixes become compositions, and portraits become pictures.

But this weakness can also be a strength. In the museum, the crucifix—out of context and freed from its explicit functions, symbols, and metaphors—can operate on a universal level: It is allowed to speak not just to or for Christians but to all—and to other works of art. In the museum, the crucifix, just like the totem, the fertility figure, the landscape, the nude, and the abstract painting, communicates to us as an expression of universal values. In art, spirituality is not denominational but expressed through plastic form.

This is what Albert Barnes understood and advocated. His foundation is a modern temple of aesthetics. Artworks exist outside—above—their specific movement, mythology, time, and place. Each piece is a gateway into an exploration of the language of art; the subject is secondary, even tertiary, to its function as a vehicle for life. The formal tension in a crucifix—that tension between flying and falling; between being held to the earth and being liberated or weightless; that tension between the comfort of gravity and the ecstasy of release—in terms of art and in terms of human nature is universal. At the Barnes, Matisse's *Dance*, Gerard David's *Crucifixion*, and an ancient Egyptian wall carving—in which a goddess is bound within the malleable plane—all explore and express similar dynamics.

Artworks still have power. But that power hangs in the balance. Recently, museums have come to resemble entertainment complexes. They are all expanding, and they are all starting to look the same. In predictable, keeping-up-with-the-Joneses fashion, the architect Renzo Piano, who butchered the Morgan Library, is now designing the expansion of the Gardner. But bigger isn't always better. Museums are living institutions. They flourish in variety. If we persist in homogenizing these institutions at the present rate, it won't be long before all that remains of the Barnes Foundation—and perhaps the collections of New York's Frick, Washington's Phillips, and London's Soane—will be a catalogue in the way there remains a catalogue of the John G. Johnson Collection (which the Philadelphia Museum of Art absorbed against the dead benefactor's explicit wishes nearly a century ago). What's next: Will the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Governor Rendell, and the Pew Family Trusts bring Falling Water to the mall on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway?

Although there are exceptions, most recent museum renovations and expansions have been more about the ambitions of museum directors, the egos of patrons, and the self-centered expressions of A-list architects than about serving the needs of art. Museums increasingly attempt to attract viewers through every avenue but that of art; through movies, restaurants, classes, gift shops, parties, pop-cultural exhibits, and interactive computers. One of the technological amenities the new Barnes will provide is an introductory film about Albert Barnes. But everything important about Barnes he said himself in the creation of the galleries on North Latch's Lane. The uprooting and maiming of the Barnes Foundation is emblematic of a great tragedy: progress overrunning great works of art. Its destruction is no different from the destruction of a Gothic cathedral.

Much more than a museum is being ruined in Merion. A lifeline is being severed. The importance of the Barnes as an educational institution—as a place where artists, as well as the public, can learn to see in a way not encouraged at other museums—cannot be overstressed. It was at the Barnes Foundation, which I first visited as a painting student 25 years ago, that everything my teachers had been saying about the interconnectedness of art finally began to make sense. The Barnes Foundation is not just another way to look at art; it is the way artists look at art.

To move the Barnes collection is to inflict havoc on a distinctive museum experience, one designed to get us closer to the minds of art's makers. To invite in all of the available 21st-century museum amenities and distractions (merely because we can) is to kill the essential spirit of the Barnes. Great museums succeed when they do more than make the old new, the past present. They succeed when, by taking us deep into works of art, they take us deeper into ourselves. This is an experience—a union between art and audience that is spiritual in nature—that Albert Barnes knew had to be nurtured. Like any spiritual encounter, it cannot be bought, sold, or stolen. But it can be destroyed. ♦

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'Franklin at the Court of France' by William Overend Geller

RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX / ART RESOURCE

Founders at Home

The human side of demigods

BY EDWARD ACHORN

Three months *after* George Washington became engaged to Martha Dandridge Custis, he penned a love letter to Sally Cary Fairfax, the wife of a neighbor and close friend: "I feel the force of her amiable beauties and the recollection of a thousand tender passages that I could wish to obliterate till I am bid to revive them," he wrote, using the third person to describe Sally. This letter has puzzled historians for two centuries: What did Washington mean sending such words on the cusp of his wedding to the woman who would be his beloved partner for the rest of his life?

The Founders, like many human beings, were full of such surprises in their love lives. Even they had skeletons in their 18th-century closets—or should we say, wardrobes. So it can hardly astonish us in the age of Tiger Woods/John Edwards that the highly polished veneers of celebrities often clash with the people inside. Strip away the public lives of famous people and you find human beings, and the disappointments and disasters that plague most of us.

The Intimate Lives of the Founding Fathers
by Thomas Fleming
Smithsonian/HarperCollins,
480 pp., $27.99

Of course, the Founders can hardly be classed with such epic phonies as Edwards and Woods, and Thomas Fleming's history is not another exercise in tearing down the Founders—an academic sport of recent decades that coincides with tearing down the country they created. Rather, his sharp focus on the private lives of the Big Six—George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison—only makes them seem more impressive. He brings us closer to those who created and preserved our constitutional republic during tumultuous times by revealing the common sufferings they, and many of us, share: financial struggles, woes with children, the heartrending deaths of those they loved dearly.

In our desire to elevate the great, we sometimes forget that every person must deal with passions and insecurities, as well as troubles in the form of illness and family trauma. And the very nature of fame exposes public people to

Edward Achorn, deputy editorial page editor of the Providence Journal, *is the author of* Fifty-nine in '84: Old Hoss Radbourn, Barehanded Baseball, and the Greatest Season a Pitcher Ever Had.

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attack, quite often by jealous, vindictive bullies and cowardly character assassins. As Fleming makes clear, the public obsession with the private lives of politicians is not merely a symptom of our age of "leaks and wandering emails, talk shows and tell-all aides." Even the mighty Washington—described in his day as "destiny's child"—did not live a perfectly charmed life, tormented as he was not only with sometimes life-threatening and possibly humiliating public service, but also with family trials, some involving a stepson who was prone to be "rambling about at nights in company with those who do not care how debauched and vicious his conduct may be." The anguish that teenagers can cause, especially in "mixed" families, is not to be gainsaid.

Fleming's intense focus on the private reveals more than the Founders' personalities. It also brings to the fore the remarkable women in their lives. *Intimate Lives* is largely about them—as it is about the harsh lives they lived. In the 18th century, women had few or no educational opportunities, could not easily divorce a cruel and abusive spouse, and had no control of their property once it was in the hands of a husband. Pregnancy was a dangerous ordeal, and the mortality rate of infants and children was horrifically high.

By late middle age, Martha Washington had lost all four of her children to death. Martha Wayles Jefferson lost four out of six children in ten years. Franklin's marriage was poisoned by his wife's bitterness over the death of their four-year-old son, Frankie, while his hated illegitimate half-brother, William, thrived.

Yet these women—in particular, Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison—were remarkable in their own right, and their bravery and determination had much to do with the success of their husbands and the republic they created. Inevitably, a book covering this much territory is episodic, but Fleming's strength—he is a novelist as well as prolific historian—is the depth of his research and eye for colorful detail, which can hardly be hinted at here. We learn here of young Washington's nature, and his love for one Virginia belle who inspired "some of the worst poetry ever committed by an adolescent"—no small feat. We are treated to such charming moments as Jefferson's arrival in Paris to take Franklin's place as ambassador. Jefferson discovers Franklin outside his house on the lawn, surrounded by a half-dozen French women hugging the balding 78-year-old. When Jefferson asks if these privileges will be transferred to the new ambassador, Franklin shakes his head and replies, "You are too young a man."

Dolley Madison, 1818

CSU ARCHIVES / EVERETT COLLECTION

Here, also, is the brilliant Hamilton, lured like a naïve schoolboy into an adulterous affair with a scheming woman working in league with her husband, who blackmailed him. Of course, it all came out in the press, blackening Hamilton's reputation to this day. He wrote in an agony of remorse: "I can never cease to condemn myself for the pang which it may inflict in a bosom eminently entitled to all my gratitude, fidelity, and love." (His religious wife Eliza found the strength to forgive him.)

Fleming also marches boldly through an academic minefield to blast away recent scholarship which insists that Jefferson sired children with one of his slaves, Sally Hemings. Many yearn for the story to be true, he suspects, for reasons more to do with the heart than historical truth. Slavery, of course, made such things possible, and critics have found Fleming's stridency on this point off-putting; but if the book has a flaw, it is Fleming's near-pathological contempt for John Adams. Our curmudgeonly second president was indisputably hotheaded, and far too free with his words for his own good. Still, he merits a more balanced treatment, as a brave advocate of independence and liberty, a brilliant thinker about the nature of tyranny and the dangers that representative republics face from within, a man who sacrificed his family life for the cause of independence, and a president who made sure that a weak and fledgling United States of America was not sucked into a suicidal war.

Of course, private lives only flesh out what is truly important about the Founders. They displayed immense courage and resourcefulness in creating an extraordinary country, where the individual is remarkably free and the government's power is constrained. What they unleashed in the realm of human achievement can seem, at times, almost miraculous. But it is under assault by forces the Founders feared: Many Americans seem to have lost the idea that people should grow up and fend for themselves in life, preferring to turn to a Big Daddy/Mommy government that will take care of their wishes and needs, failing to understand the cost of permanent dependency.

Still, those who love liberty can understand what Washington meant when he wrote: "To see this country happy is so much the wish of my soul, nothing on this side of Elysium can be placed in competition with it." ♦

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B&A

Unhappy in Exile

The 'self-hating immigrant' would do well to rebuild his home. **BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ**

Albanian refugees in Greece, 1997

IVO LORENC / SYGMA / CORBIS

Since the fall of Soviet communism 20 years ago, the transformation of national borders that were previously tightly defined and generally closed has confounded local identities in Europe, typically through controversy about the character of immigrants. This discourse most frequently concentrates on the challenge of a growing Muslim population in Western Europe, and includes opposition to Turkish membership in the European Union, as well as the recent Swiss ban on construction of minarets, and other episodes.

A Short Border Handbook
by Gazmend Kapllani
Portobello, 144 pp., $12.25

The Country Where No One Ever Dies
by Ornela Vorpsi
Dalkey Archive, 120 pp., $12.95

Stephen Schwartz, a frequent contributor, is the author of The Two Faces of Islam *and* The Other Islam: Sufism and the Road to Global Harmony.

But the new wandering of peoples across the old continent is not limited to the Islamic influx. The discontent of established populations toward new aspirants to residence extends past religion and terrorism. Rapacious Russian oligarchs, now free to invest and spend in the West, and cruel Balkan gangsters, dealing in drugs and women, are seldom associated in the media with radical Islam, although many such individuals may be Muslim in origin.

Resentment of the newcomer has no obvious limits. One newspaper column in Britain after the 2008 Bombay atrocities protested that there was no room in the United Kingdom for "little Pakistans" or "little Polands." But South Asian enclaves have been features of British life for decades, and nobody suspects that Polish immigrants sympathize with terror. Nevertheless, in Britain, France, Germany, and elsewhere, a grievance against the figurative "Polish plumber," allowed to work outside his homeland by Warsaw's accession to the EU, and competing to undermine local wage standards, may be as common as rejection of an expanded Muslim presence. This xenophobia has already increased as a byproduct of the European financial crisis, and some Polish immigrants to Western Europe are reported to have repatriated themselves because of the downturn. In the Netherlands last year, just as the anti-Islam political candidate Geert Wilders scored a major gain in votes, I was astonished to hear a Dutch-born Muslim woman of Moroccan background declare that she had voted for Wilders! This was not because of his stand on her religion, but because he might satisfy her fear of entry into Holland by low-paid Romanians.

Before the walls came down, the émigré to Western Europe from Communist countries was typically a noble dissident rather than a professional felon or trafficker in women. Still, movies featuring Russian *mafiya* villains, such as *Eastern Promises* and *We Own the Night*, both released in 2007, granted a certain perverse honor to the criminal organizations and leaders produced by the Soviet gulag. This was manifested in their protagonists' refusal to go down on their knees before *any* authority—knees tattooed, in *Eastern Promises*, with stars indicating a refusal to obey.

Of course, Russia was not the only country to institutionalize a prison system built explicitly on extreme brutalization. But Soviet prison camps housed so many millions of people that a subculture of depravity was easily maintained, and even expanded. The gulag was a school for criminals as, in czarist times, the prison had been a school for revolutionaries. In the smallest and least fortunate of the European Communist states—Albania under Enver Hoxha—the numbers of imprisoned were large in proportion to the country's size, but

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the prisons themselves were smaller and the victims more easily and more thoroughly reduced to a kind of ambulatory nullity. Many previously unknown facts about the Albanian gulag are now being released, as official archives are opened; but anybody who has spent time in Albania recognizes that the weight of the regime and its ideology was so great that it erased or demolished the personalities of the imprisoned.

The annihilation of individual character is vividly depicted in these two books, both of which describe Albanian emigrants to neighboring countries (Greece and Italy, respectively). These are neither dissenters overcoming all obstacles to gain freedom nor energetic entrepreneurs eager to establish themselves nor deranged lawbreakers. No, the refugees from Albania here are something else: They have been so degraded by the specific form of communism in their small and isolated homeland that they seem deprived of any normal feelings. They are self-hating immigrants, numbed by their experience and blindly seeking another life of which they know, and from which they expect, very little. They lack the hubris of Russian mobsters no less than the fanaticism of Muslim fundamentalists. They have been reduced to nothing, and seek only to find a way to become something.

Gazmend Kapllani, author of *A Short Border Handbook*, is a distinctive case in that, notwithstanding deep national rivalries between Albanians and Greeks, he has gained considerable stature as a print and radio journalist in Athens. "There is something heroic about the way a migrant abandons his native land," he writes. The self-hating immigrant cannot easily learn the language of his new country and finds his misuse of it annoying to locals, and so he becomes silent. "Better mute than annoying," the author says. If driven to protest the irked reaction to his poor spoken Greek, the self-hating immigrant wants to ask, "What are you all so afraid of? I love this country."

Kapllani describes the reach of immigrant self-hatred when he notes that Africans attempting to get into Europe burn their identity papers to prevent repatriation if caught. For them, "death has lost its sting"—which is a way of saying that they have lost the will to live. Such people still try to cross borders, sometimes trying so often that (as Kapllani relates) an acquaintance who unsuccessfully entered Greece 34 times in seven years calculated that, counting all the time he had spent in failed crossings and detention facilities, he had spent two out of those previous seven years on the border. In 1991 communism finally collapsed in Albania, and migrants to Greece suddenly had to contend with only one set of hostile guards. In addition, where Albanian Communist guards would kill prospective migrants, the Greeks would simply process and deport them. Some, like Kapllani, were lucky enough to find friends and patrons.

Anybody who has spent time in Albania recognizes that the weight of the regime and its ideology was so great that it literally erased or demolished the personalities of the imprisoned.

In both books, sex is a source of shame, humiliation, and further abasement. Once settled in Greece, the Albanian migrants in Kapllani's chronicle find that they are welcome to spend time in porn theaters, but houses of prostitution bear signs reading "Greeks Only"—in Albanian as well as in Greek. Of course, women refugees are sexual prey for drivers and others who help move the degraded back and forth. Ornela Vorpsi's chronicle is one in which the corruption of human instincts has become nearly total. It is a sequence of episodes in which several girls and women, whose stories are strung together as if they were the story of one person, are continuously molested by men, relatives as well as neighbors. *The Country Where No One Ever Dies* begins with all Albanian girls being raised to think that they are prostitutes by nature: If they grow up and marry, and their husbands are imprisoned, they sew up their sexual organ to preserve themselves for their incarcerated mate.

Vorpsi evokes a self-hatred that permeates the being of the female immigrant. In one story, girls are sent for military training and placed in the famous defensive bunkers built by the Hoxha regime, and which still cover Albania. They find that the bunkers have been used as lavatories; but they also learn that practicing with their weapons produces a deafening concussion that "is normal after firing a rifle from inside a bunker." During their military training some girls discover that the grave of a Sufi mystic has been regularly tended with fresh flowers in the hope that the "wondrous dervish" would grant favors to devotees. To maintain such a grave would normally have resulted in a long prison stay under Hoxha, but like vegetation that can break stone, evidence of human spirituality cannot be completely eliminated. Yet even these girls are so conditioned by self-hatred that they, too, are driven away from their country.

The lesson here—and it is a crucial one—is that immigrants from poor countries may not migrate simply because of lack of opportunities but from lack of self-respect. Whether by communism or by nationalism, they were promised everything and received nothing good. Demoralized by their rulers, they feel no capacity to revive the spirit manifest in their histories. In developed countries we may still need, even after economic shrinkage, immigrants for jobs our own citizens, aging and with declining birth rates, will not fill. But there is nothing wrong with telling these immigrants that hard work at home, repairing their own country, may prove a wiser choice in the long run. ♦

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B&A

Pop-Up Cuisine

The adventurous gourmet samples some underground restaurants. **BY SARA LODGE**

Kate Fox, a London anthropologist, concludes that what is most distinctive about the English is that they will do almost *anything* to avoid interaction with people they don't know.

A joke has it that Medusa once visited London. As the gorgon crossed Trafalgar Square, the snakes hissing in her hair, Italian and French and American tourists were turned to stone. She boarded the subway. Again, she left a sculpture trail of tourists: Australians, Japanese, Africans. The British, however, continued on their way quite unaffected by her petrifying glare. As she was leaving, she hailed the station guard: "Perish!" she demanded. "I fear you're in the wrong place, madam," he replied, instinctively avoiding eye contact like all his countrymen, "you'll find the French capital on the other side of the Channel."

Perhaps because the English fear spontaneous social contact so much, such encounters carry a frisson that they could not generate anywhere else: an illicit thrill that other nations reserve for surreptitious sex. That, at any rate, is my theory as to why, since last year, underground restaurants have become the hottest dining venues in London.

For the uninitiated: Underground restaurants are not located in basements; nor do they involve eating on the Piccadilly line. They are supper clubs, typically run by enthusiastic amateur chefs, where guests come and dine in their living rooms. Sometimes known as "pop-up" restaurants because, like mushrooms, they may appear for a season and then vanish, underground restaurants do not post signs on the wall reminding you of the Heimlich maneuver or telling you how many people fire regulations permit to stand in them. You eat there at your own risk. And most fascinatingly for the English, you meet at your own risk, too.

We are all familiar with dinner parties. Guests bring booze; hosts sweat over the chocolate mousse. At worst, the one is so busy trying to prevent the meat from burning, and the other is so busy trying to prevent the conversation from glaciating, that both feel under strain. Underground restaurants have the informality of a private home: You can peruse the book collection, peek in the refrigerator, or help yourself to water. But the element of surprise—and the fact that there is a financial transaction involved so there's no *obligation* to make small talk, and the host won't be waving from the kitchen like a trapped octopus—gives the experience a fresh energy.

Here's what you do. You find the underground restaurant online. You send an email. You pay (normally £25-£35) in advance. A day before the event you receive the address and the time of the dinner. Then you take your courage and your map in both hands and set off along strange streets to ring a doorbell that will deliver you to—Meals of the Unexpected.

My first underground dinner was at The Secret Ingredient, run by Horton Jupiter in an area north of King's Cross that is on the road to gentrification but hasn't yet arrived. Alighting from a bus, I found myself amid former public housing, with apartment blocks that allude hopefully to Britain's literary history: Shakespeare Way, Marlowe Court, Milton Avenue. I traversed epic and tragic pathways before finding Mr. Jupiter's bijou pad, into which other enterprising underground diners were ducking.

The sense of welcome and of fun was immediate. We were ushered into a living room furnished with trestle tables, funky posters, and fairy lights. I sat with Lyndon, an architectural photographer, and Nina, a Finnish singer. Before long we were so deep in conversation that we almost didn't notice when the first of eight courses arrived.

Horton specializes in Japanese cuisine. We were regaled with delicious dishes including edamame; fish soup with a poached quail's egg in it; marinated onions; tiny asparagus like mascara wands; miso and sticky rice; a mirror plate with green beans; radish with lemon and apple; seaweed and cabbage; shitake mushrooms; tofu coins and pink potatoes; and green tea jelly with sake.

The mood of the company was lively but laid back. Most dinners were under £45 and I was interested to note that my table was half black and half white, a mix that isn't as common at London dinner parties as it might be. By the end of the evening, people were swapping numbers and promising to keep in touch.

Horton Jupiter appeared with dessert. He's a likeable man: smallish, shaggy of hair and large of smile—rather like the kind of dog in the park that brings you, a complete stranger, a ball in its mouth, inviting you to play with enthusiasm so winning that your resistance melts.

"Is Horton Jupiter your real name?" I asked him. "Well, Santa's real, isn't he?" grinned Mr. Jupiter. When he isn't running The Secret Ingredient, which he does twice a week, he sings and plays guitar in a pop group. "Has anything ever gone wrong with these dinners?" I asked. "Well, we did once have a guest who didn't want to leave," he mused. "He ended up staying the night here." I believe him. I had to depart before midnight, but Lyndon and Nina reported the next day that they had stayed into the small hours, feasting on cheese and toast and drinking wine on the house.

Emboldened by this experience, I tried another supper club, run by "Ms. Marmite Lover," the self-appointed doyenne of Underground Restaurateurs. I chose one of her culinary theme nights: An evening devoted to food

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based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian. Nautical attire was requested. So I rode the subway clad in a stripy matelot dress with a skull and crossbones headscarf, bearing a bottle of rum. I disembarked into a dining room with white walls and a high ceiling, white linen tablecloths, candles, a wood fire with a huge mirror above it, roses on the mantelpiece, an eclectic selection of antique plates, and Victorian lemonade glasses.

Ms. Marmite Lover is the kind of woman you would cast as Mistress Quickly in a production of *Falstaff*. Ample of bosom and girth, short like pastry and sharp like mustard, she is an earthy, commanding hostess. Be late and you may have to walk the plank. But her supper club has sparkiness: a bourgeois Bohemian sense of theater. You come for the experience as much as the food.

Appearing in a white apron with feathers in her hair like a Victorian barmaid, she explained the menu at the start of the evening, which was helpful. There was Grog (strong rum punch); Blind Scouse (a barley and vegetable soup) and Hard Tack; Stargazy Pie (herring and egg) with the Dog's Body (split peas) and mushroom ketchup; then, for dessert, Blind Baby (a stodgy but tasty suet pudding) with rosewater custard, cheshire cheese with oatcakes and honey, and coffee with Ratafia biscuits.

The food was a learning experience. Hard Tack is ship's biscuit that was oven-baked four times so that it could travel on sea voyages lasting years. It looks like napkins that have been folded lengthwise several times and then nuked by a ray gun until they practically turned to stone. It tastes a bit like uncooked pasta. Like pasta, once you've soaked it in your soup for 20 minutes, it becomes edible. Everything else tasted pretty good. And the Stargazy Pie merited a photograph, the heads and tails of the herrings poking skywards out of the pastry crust.

My fellow diners were charming. Sweetly entranced by their own daring in being there, they agreed that the best thing about pop-up restaurants was the social fun. People shared wine. The record player playing "The Four Seasons" got stuck a few times so we had to live with a perpetually arrested Spring. (Given British weather, what's new?) But it was evident that all the guests were enjoying themselves, especially the ones who were stopped by transport police on the way for carrying fake cutlasses.

The final underground dinner I attended was at a very different kind of supper club, Nuno Mendes's The Loft. Mendes was a chef at El Bulli, the renowned Spanish restaurant with three Michelin stars, before coming to London to mastermind his own restaurant, which will open this year. He started The Loft as a way of trying out new recipes on the kind of diners he'd like to attract. Every week he, or a guest chef, cooks for around 20 guests, who pay £117.50 for 10 courses paired with wines.

The Loft would not look out of place in Brooklyn. It is a converted warehouse, with exposed brick walls decorated with experimental black and white photographs. The atmosphere is informal. People arrive and mingle as they would at a party, assisted by cocktails. We nibbled very thin slices of melba toast dipped in celeriac froth. The guests were mostly young urban professionals; the one thing they had in common was a fascination with food. Some had been to renowned gastronomic destinations. They told horror stories of gagging on raw razor clams and a concept dish called "The Sound of the Sea" that involved plugging in an iPod and listening to crashing waves as one consumed a plateful of edible "sand" swept by a wave of lemon foam. This made me feel quite nervous.

Our evening's menu, however, was stimulating without being at all scary. The chef was Ben Greeno of Noma, a top-notch Danish restaurant. Nordic cuisine, like Nordic design, is not about richness so much as clarity. All the dishes had the freshness of an inspired idea that has always been around, but has never been presented to you so well. Our first course was an oyster, half filled with rhubarb granita, paired with rosé wine the same deep ochre-pink as the tulips on the table.

'Sir Joseph Banks About to Eat an Alligator' (1788) by Thomas Rowlandson

TATE, LONDON / ART RESOURCE

There followed nine small plates of equal brilliance. My favorite dishes were the salt-baked beetroot with licorice and goat's cheese, the potato sliced into waxy coins and presented in a tiny puddle of cheese "soup" with mushrooms, and the perfectly cooked beef with onion puree, charred spring onion and brown butter. All were essays in style: texture, color, and flavor. Unusual ingredients included gorse flowers and seabuckthorn berries, which have an astringency and sweetness similar to passion fruit.

I enjoyed the surprise of not choosing or knowing what I was about to eat. The sign of a really good course is that it makes you think again about some famil-

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iar unobtrusive ingredient which has been quietly working for you for years, but suddenly reveals an intense talent, a gorgeous face, you'd never suspected. In my case it was the onion, which was sensational. It was as if Mr. Onion, a pedestrian chap from Accounts, had suddenly taken off his glasses and swept me into a romantic embrace.

Alas, it was over far too soon. People sallied forth into the real world of takeaways and building supply depots that cluster in this area of North London. But they had given me useful information: names of other good supper clubs that have sprung up recently: Urban Sage, London Fields. Clearly there is something about underground dining that is just what London needs right now.

People have posited economic recession as a reason for the phenomenon. But I don't believe them. The British have always loved the idea that behind a very ordinary-looking door there lies a fantasy world. This is the premise of Alice in Wonderland, of Narnia, of Harry Potter. Eating underground, you become the protagonist in a small adventure of this kind. And that's a relish you can't buy in the shops. ♦

B&A

Right of Privacy

National security meets the culture of modern journalism. **BY GARY SCHMITT**

God forbid that the United States suffer a second terrorist attack on the order of 9/11—or worse. Should one occur, however, heads will roll, with whatever administration is in office being picked apart by Congress, the media, and the public for its failure to protect the country. Fingers will be pointed at the CIA, FBI, DHS, Justice, and the White House—and perhaps justifiably so. What you will not see, however, are fingers pointed at the *New York Times*. But it may well be that the *Times*, the nation's "paper of record," will be as culpable as any of those other institutions.

Necessary Secrets
National Security, the Media, and the Rule of Law
by Gabriel Schoenfeld
Norton, 309 pp., $27.95

It was the *Times* that decided to ignore administration pleas and publish, in late 2005, the blockbuster story revealing the Bush administration's program to track *en masse* al Qaeda communications. And it was the *Times* that, a little over six months later, ran a front-page article detailing how the government was tapping into the international bank transfer system, enabling it to track terrorist financing and, with it, names and burgeoning plots.

Of course, it will be impossible to prove culpability on the *Times*'s part should another attack occur. Nevertheless, as General Michael Hayden, former director of the National Security Agency, has said about the intercept program: "If we had had this program in place [before 9/11] we would have identified some of the al Qaeda operatives in the United States." In short, it is almost certain that, by running the stories it did, the *Times*—along with its sister journals that rushed to fill in missing parts of the story—made it more likely that Osama bin Laden and company would modify their operational practices, and American security would be worse off for it.

But don't expect the *Times*—or, for that matter, most major American media outlets—to own up to that fact. As Gabriel Schoenfeld argues in this insightful, historically rigorous, and pointed account of the tension between a free press and government secrecy, editors and reporters have come to believe that the First Amendment makes them sole judge and jury of what secrets can be published. Since the 1970s, with the publication of the Pentagon Papers, revelations about various improprieties of the U.S. intelligence community, and the rise of the superstar investigative reporter, the press has laid claim to an "unfettered freedom of action with accountability to no one but themselves." If the print media had a sense of irony, they would see that what began as an assault against an imperial presidency has produced an imperial press.

This absolutist reading of the freedom of the press, along with accompanying aversion to the notion that the government has a right, indeed a duty, to keep its secrets, would be news to the country's Framers, according to Schoenfeld. From the nation's first days there were elaborate and sustained efforts to keep diplomatic and military matters secret, and no legal scholar of note argued for an unfettered right to print anything that came into an editor's hands. And indeed, even when the Supreme Court has batted down efforts by the government to stop a publication—as in the Pentagon Papers case—the justices have made it clear that, should a story warrant it, prosecution after publication is still possible.

Nor is it the case, as *Necessary Secrets* reminds us, that the press has always held the view that its job was a single-minded effort to uncover any and all secrets that it could. During World War II, for example, President Roosevelt established an Office of Censorship to help keep military-relevant information from appearing in the press or in radio broadcasts. But the system for doing so was based largely on voluntary adherence to a government-authored censorship code while the office itself was headed by journalists. To keep editors and publishers informed about what not to publish, the government would distribute regular updates on what matters to avoid writing or broadcasting about—including subjects clearly pointing to the fact that the government had

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an atomic bomb program underway.

Instead of seeing these bulletins as a mother lode of leads for reporters to follow up on, the vast majority of the press deferred to the government—behaving as citizens first, members of the fourth estate second.

Of course, as Schoenfeld takes care to point out, the media are aided and abetted in breaking the veil of government secrecy by those inside the government willing to leak such information. And this is not a new problem. From the beginning the government has had problems keeping things secret. Early, famous leakers included Thomas Paine and James Monroe. And perhaps the most famous leaker of all was Herbert Yardley, the onetime government codebreaker who detailed his prior success in unlocking Japanese ciphers after World War I in a series of magazine articles and then a book, with the result that the Japanese upgraded the security of their systems, leaving us blind to Japanese plans for attacking Pearl Harbor.

Yet by all accounts the problem of leaks has grown considerably in recent years which, when combined with the press's own predilection to run a story unless the government can conclusively show that doing so puts lives directly in jeopardy, means we have, as Schoenfeld spells out, created a dangerous dynamic.

It would be wrong, however, to leave the impression that *Necessary Secrets* is some diatribe against modern journalistic practices. Schoenfeld fully understands that there are costs to government secrecy in the quality of our democratic deliberations. Moreover, *Necessary Secrets* provides a nuanced, balanced account of the applicable laws and cases that have arisen from the government's relatively rare efforts (and even rarer successful efforts) to prosecute anyone for breaking their secrecy pledges or publishing material that violates espionage laws.

Although existing laws could be refined to better deal with this problem, *Necessary Secrets* suggests that the statutes we do have, combined with court precedents, are generally sufficient. But administration after administration has been reluctant to use them—or as Schoenfeld concludes from his review of recent history, to use them wisely. For reasons that are obvious but not satisfactory, the government has found it easier to target isolated individuals, such as Steven Rosen and Keith Weissman in the AIPAC case, than to tackle a media giant, such as the *New York Times*: this, despite the fact that a stronger case could be made that the *Times*, in publishing its stories on the intercept programs, was running more seriously afoul of the law than either Rosen or Weissman, and its actions were more damaging.

Allowing the press to use the First Amendment as a Get Out of Jail card is, as this thoughtful book makes clear, a recipe for ensuring that keeping real secrets—necessary secrets—will only grow increasingly difficult. ♦

B&A

Road from Damascus

Lebanon hangs suspended between past and present.

BY DAVID SCHENKER

This past February, *Le Monde* published a detailed report suggesting that Hezbollah participated in the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri. The story was old news—*Der Spiegel* had run a comparable story last year—but its repetition in *Le Monde* increased the allegation's credibility. Today, fallout from the contention that the Shiite militia helped kill the leader of Lebanon's Sunni Muslim community continues to reverberate in Beirut, and two decades after a civil war that cost 150,000 lives, sectarian tensions stemming from Hariri's murder once again threaten to plunge Lebanon into conflict.

The Ghosts of Martyrs Square
An Eyewitness Account of Lebanon's Life Struggle
by Michael Young
Simon & Schuster, 295 pp., $26

These tensions provide the backdrop to this excellent new study by Michael Young, opinion page editor of the leading Lebanese English-language paper, *The Daily Star*. It begins with the assassination of Hariri in downtown Beirut. Young, like many Lebanese, holds Syria responsible for the massive car bomb that dispatched Hariri and 21 others that day. The motive: The Assad regime in Syria believed that Hariri, in league with then-French president Jacques Chirac, supported U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 demanding an end to the decades-long Syrian occupation. Worse, Damascus feared Hariri might be preparing to ally himself with a growing coalition of anti-Syrian politicians. This was, according to Young, "a high stakes game [in which Hariri's] successes endangered Syria's twenty-nine-year-old rule over Lebanon as well as Bashar Assad's authority at home."

Immediately following the blast, a cross-section of Lebanese descended on Martyrs Square in Beirut, a centrally located, wide-open piazza adjacent to Hariri's temporary (now permanent) mausoleum, to demand the truth about the murder. The square, named in honor of Lebanese nationalists executed by a Turkish governor in the early 20th century, served during the civil war as a frontline of fighting between Christian and Muslim militias and subsequently became home to a tent city comprising "divergent forces that later sought to transform Hariri's killing into leverage to get the Syrians out of Lebanon."

The Assad regime and its local Leb-

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anese supporters, led by Hezbollah, sought to counter this "Independence Intifada" and reverse the anti-Syrian tide. On March 8, Hezbollah held its own demonstration to "thank" Syria. But while impressive, the Hezbollah rally was overshadowed by a March 14 demonstration when nearly 1.5 million—or one of every three—Lebanese gathered in Martyrs Square to rally against the Syrian occupation. By the end of April, Syrian forces were gone and an international investigation, under U.N. auspices, was underway to determine culpability in the Hariri slaying.

Still, the victory of the March 14 coalition proved to be short lived, and pyrrhic. The counter-offensive by Syria and its allies started almost immediately, with predictably bloody consequences: During 2005-09 nearly a dozen pro-Western, anti-Syrian politicians were assassinated, as were two senior Lebanese military officers assisting the U.N. inquiry. With progress slowed on the Hariri investigation, the Cedar Revolution lost momentum, culminating in the May 2008 Hezbollah invasion of Beirut, the surrender of the March 14 coalition, and the creeping return of Syrian influence in Lebanon.

Lebanon had come full circle. Unable to bring to fruition the promise of the Cedar Revolution, it returned to its more natural state of Syrian suzerainty, as March 14 politicians lined up to make the pilgrimage to Damascus. Sectarian tensions—and the threat of civil war—crested after the 2009 *Der Spiegel* article implicating Hezbollah in the Hariri killing. Such revelations, said the enigmatic Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, would "open a Pandora's box between Sunnis and Shiites."

Michael Young, a Lebanese national with intimate knowledge of the labyrinthine world of Lebanese politics, weaves his tale of the rise and fall of the Cedar Revolution with consummate skill and erudition. He makes exceedingly complex history and intrigue accessible and introduces readers to a colorful cast of characters. On a Saturday morning, for example, we visit Jumblatt in his ancestral palace at Mukhtar and witness a distribution of patronage to Jumblatt's constituents rivaling that of Vito Corleone. Later, we travel to Paris to meet with General Michel Aoun—who, upon his return to Lebanon in 2005, allied himself with Hezbollah and Damascus. "He was someone who had surrounded himself with deferential devotees," Young writes, "for whom he had no visible empathy. . . . [Aoun] was an astute reader of the Christians' gut fears, but also of the bitterness of those most socially vulnerable among them."

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah, 2001

Young's observations about Syria are equally revealing. He maintains that Syria was forced out of Lebanon because the Assad regime "took Lebanon for granted," adding that "Lebanon can be unforgiving to those who think that fear alone can maintain order." Bashar al-Assad's late father Hafez understood that principle: "Most politicians could spend years being demeaned by Syrian intelligence officers but at the same time accept this because the Syrians worked through a façade of counterfeit consideration and deference."

Syrian misbehavior extends to its diplomatic corps. Young describes how, in 2007, Foreign Minister Walid Mouallem, "a rotund man with cascading terraces of fat," threatened the American ambassador in Beirut, Jeffrey Feltman, by telling U.N. secretary general Ban Ki Moon that Feltman should be required to leave Lebanon, adding that he was "prepared to offer him a vacation in Hawaii"—an offer the ambassador couldn't refuse!

The Iranian/Syrian-backed Hezbollah is "a total movement in the least totalistic of Arab societies," and in the course of pursuing its declared vision of "resistance"—against Israel as well as its own domestic adversaries—Hezbollah has "turn[ed] the Lebanese political system into an object of derision." Its officials claim that resistance is "a vision and a methodology," and its abundant weapons serve as an insurance policy against the remarginalization of Lebanon's historically underserved, underrepresented, and politically weak Shiite community. Of course, Hezbollah's possession of an impressive and extensive arsenal has triggered anxieties among Lebanese who view it as an existential threat:

> The dilemma is straightforward. Either Hezbollah disarms . . . and by doing so relinquishes its reason to exist; or it refuses to do so, maintaining the Lebanese in a near-permanent state of civil dissonance.

It is this tension, born of Lebanon's sectarian and liberal society, that runs throughout Young's account. Considering divergent paths to the future, he asks a pertinent question: Will Lebanon become Hanoi or Hong Kong, "a symbol of militancy and armed struggle, as represented by Hezbollah, or would it opt for the path laid out by Rafiq al-Hariri, who [had] sought to make the country a station of liberal capitalism and ecumenical permissiveness?" ♦

CORBIS

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B&A

We Wuz Robbed

As Barnum might have said, there's a 'Lost' viewer born every minute. **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

In 1973, the wonderful Paul Newman-Robert Redford con-man movie *The Sting*—then, now, and forever one of the most entertaining films ever made—introduced us to the idea of the "long con." If you're going to try and trick a murderous gangster out of a fortune, you can only succeed if the gangster stays conned permanently.

This week, after six years, the nerviest and most expensive Long Con in history finally reached its end, only its target wasn't a murderous gangster but the American television audience. Early indications are that millions of people, just like the gangster in *The Sting*, are going to stay conned. Millions of others are going to figure it out and they are going to be furious—but unlike a psychopathic gangster, they will have no recourse except impotent complaint. And then there are those of us who figured out that it was all a bluff years ago and yet have stayed around to the bitter end.

Meanwhile, the con artists are deservedly laughing all the way to the bank. Their names are Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof, and they are the head writers of the ABC series *Lost*. The show finally closed shop on May 23. As I write this, the final episode hasn't yet aired, but after watching all 119 previous hours of their show, I can state with a reasonable degree of certainty that it will be beautifully filmed, wonderfully well acted, brilliantly paced, superbly scored—and will be a complete and utter cheat. Like the overflow crowds at P.T. Barnum's circus who were led to an exciting event by the sign "This Way to the Egress," only to discover they had been directed through the exit, *Lost* viewers were directed to this sixth and final season with a promise of completion, only to find themselves kicked out the back door on May 23.

Lost is about a plane crash that marooned a large cast of characters on an island somewhere in the South Pacific from which it was impossible to escape. The island has mystical and science-fictional aspects to it. It houses both a polar bear and a flying plume of black smoke that kills people. There is a 19th-century shipwreck in the middle of the jungle. Cancer patients are cured by the island; wheelchair-bound people find they can walk; pregnant women can't deliver children. Eventually, it turns out that there is a mysterious man-made hatch leading down into an underground bunker. And there the first season ends.

Now the sixth season has come and gone, and in a display of narrative chutzpah unrivaled in creative history, *not a single thread* of these first-season plotlines has been tied up. We have finally learned that the flying plume of smoke is what remains of someone who was pushed into a tunnel of golden light 2,500 years ago, but that's no answer, because we don't know why that man was on the island or what turned him into smoke or why it was smoke or why he went around killing people.

Cuse and Lindelof obviously had no idea what they were going to do with all their plotlines, and in a stroke of con man genius, they realized they should just do . . . whatever.

And so, with each successive season, Cuse and Lindelof have simply added more—more mysteries, more characters, and more confusion. It makes no sense to mention any one of them, since by one count there are something like 80 unresolved plotlines. As it became increasingly clear this season that there would be almost no resolution, one could see the *Lost* fanatics of the Internet seeking new Kool-Aid to drink. "The show is about the characters!" they say. "Life is a mystery—why should the show be resolved?"

Here's why. Mystery plots offer an unstated pact: You follow me along and try to make sense of the mystery and in the end you will find out if you're right or wrong. *Lost* is a 25,000-piece jigsaw puzzle that can't be assembled into a whole. It's an incredible violation of the compact between its creators and its audience. That is why, along the way, *Lost* lost nearly half its audience.

The only question you need to ask yourself now is: Why did I keep watching if I figured out after the second episode of the second season that there would never be any answers? There are two possible answers for you to debate. One: That is an unsolvable mystery akin to *Lost* itself. Two: I'm a sucker.

The Internet chat may now begin. ♦

John Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

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PARODY

"Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who left the Republican Party a year ago in hopes of salvaging a 30-year career, was rejected on Tuesday by Democratic primary voters, with Representative Joe Sestak winning the party's nomination on an anti-incumbent wave that is defining the mid-term elections." **—New York Times, *May 19, 2010***

So we w
right. So doesn't tha

DAY, MAY 25, 2010 ONE DOLLAR CHEAP

SPECTER BACK IN RACE, FORMS ZOMBIE PARTY

'You can't get rid of me. Never, ever.'

By PETER BAKER and JEFF ZELENY

PHILADELPHIA — Standing before a half dozen cameras in front of Independence Hall, Democratic senator Arlen Specter announced he was back in the Senate race, running as a third-party candidate. His newly formed group calls itself the Zombie Party.

"What best represents my tireless efforts, my relentless nature, my ruthless ambition … to serve the people of Pennsylvania?" asked Specter. "Well, the first thing that came to my mind was a zombie." The senator further elaborated that the undead being he envisions is not the slow-footed zombie from "Night of the Living Dead," but rather "the adrenaline-fueled, hungry-for-human-flesh kind" from "28 Days Later." "You can't get rid of me, no matter how hard you try," he said. "I'll just keep coming at you, over and over again. And because I will do whatever it takes, I will win."

The Zombie Party's executive director, Pennsylvania governor Edward G. Rendell, clarified that his team is still in the midst of gathering enough signatures to get on the ballot. "I'm not sure when the deadline is, but we will find a way. You really can't get rid of Arlen so easily. He showed up at my front door yesterday morning and refused to leave until I let him in, around supper time."

Specter had considered rejoining the Republican Party: "I'd been a Republican for most of my life. I defended the party and its principles in the darkest of hours. Sure we had some disagreements, but I never felt like I really left the party." The state's party chairman, Rob Gleason, however, thought differently, telling Specter, "You're dead to me." Replied Specter, "You mean undead."

If the Zombie Party fails to make it onto the November ballot, Specter said he will probably join the Tea Party (it is unclear whether or not he understands the movement is not an actual political party). Failing that, Specter may form yet another party—the Anti-Incumbent Party. "Both Sestak and Toomey are incumbents," explained Specter, "whereas I am not … a House incumbent." As for critics who call Specter part of the establishment, the senator responds, "Not prov-

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NEWSCOM

At a Zombie Party rally, Sen. Arlen Specter (center) said, "The great thing is, zombies never tire, they never sleep. We can annoy you endlessly."

Blair to Host 'Unsolved Mysteries'

the weekly Standard
MAY 31, 2010

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